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Dr. Harka Gurung
(1939-2006)

IN MEMORY OF DR. HARKA GURUNG (1939-2006)

Dilli R. Dahal

Dr. Harka Bahadur Gurung (1939-2006), well known for his wide-ranging scholarship, died in a helicopter crash on September 23, 2006 in Taplejung District, Eastern Nepal. This small note on Dr. Harka Gurung basically focuses on two things: a) Background information on his family, education and services, and b) His scholarship and contributions to social sciences in Nepal.

Family Background and Academic Career

Dr. Harka Gurung was born in Taranche, a small village in Lamjung in Central Nepal on February 5, 1939 in a soldier-cum priestly Gurung family. His grandfather used to work as *Pachu* priest. The snow peaks of Manasulu and Himalchuli loom large just 24 kilometres north of the village Taranche, and this village was situated on the left bank of the Marshyandi river. This natural landscape of birthplace not only developed in him a sense of "belongingness" to the location throughout his life but also opened up the path to becoming a good geographer in the future.

He was the fourth son of the family. He was popularly known as "Thula" (big) by his peers in Taranche as he was the first youngest son (*Thula kancha*) in the family. His father was a *subedar* (non-commissioned first class officer) in the British army in India. His two elder brothers also worked in the British army in India. So it was natural that he spent his childhood with his parents in Dehardun, India, with the children of army families.

He started learning the basic Buddhist Lamaistic education from his grandfather at home. He learnt *Tamukui* or Gurung *kura* at home and learnt Nepali from his friends as the village was dominated by the Chhetri community. His formal schooling began in the Children School, Deharadun, at the age of nine and he finished high school from King George Military School, Jalandhar, in 1955. This military school provided him with the foundation of a good education including discipline, games and sports. It is interesting to note here that despite his education in the military school and the background of army families, he did not join in the Indian army. There could be two reasons for this: i) His short physical stature did not motivate him to join the army, and ii) His keen interest in pursuing higher studies.

From Deharadun, he came to Kathmandu and finished his Intermediate of Arts from Trichandra College in 1957. He went to Patna College, Patna (Bihar, India) to continue further education. A large number of Nepali students would go to Patna for a degree in higher education in those days as it

was closer to Nepal and there was some level of understanding of higher education between the Government of Nepal and Patna University, Bihar, India. Gurung not only earned a first class first B.A (Hons.) degree from Patna College in 1959, but he was also popular in other extra curricular activities. He was the captain of football and hockey team and the General Secretary of the Nepali Students' Union. He also developed good skills in painting. While studying for his M.A. degree in geography from Patna University, he received a scholarship to study geography at the University of Edinburgh where he finished his Post graduate Diploma in 1961 and a Ph.D. degree in geography in 1965. His Ph.D. dissertation entitled, "The Valley of Pokhara: Prolegomena to a Regional Study" (Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh, July 1965) is to this day widely cited as a source to understanding the Pokhara valley.

He began his academic assignments as a Demonstrator at the University of Edinburgh (1963-64) and continued as a Research Fellow, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (1964-66). He served as a Lecturer in the Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu (1966-68) and Visiting Fellow, Population Institute, East West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii (1984-85). He served as a Member and the Vice Chairman in the National Planning Commission (1968-75); Minister of State for Education, Industry and Commerce (1975-77) and Minister of State for Tourism, and Public Works and Transport (1977-78). His last assignment was the Director of Asia and Pacific Development Centre, an intergovernmental organization based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (1993-98). He joined New ERA, a non-governmental organization based in Kathmandu, in 1980, and continued his association with this institution till his death in September 2006.

Scholarly Contributions

Dr. Harka Gurung has published several books and articles and given hundreds of interviews to many renowned newspapers in Nepal. Before his death in September 2006, there are a total of 697 publications to his credit: 15 books, 7 small monographs and 675 articles and reports. This long list of his publications will appear in some other volume in the future. Tables 1, 2 and 3 below provide a summary of his writings according to thematic contributions and chronological order, including the most important books with major themes.

Table 1: Harka Gurung: Thematic Bibliography

	Subject	Items and %
A	Agriculture/Forestry/Wildlife	23 (3.3)
B	Arts/Literate/Sports	19 (2.7)
C	Language/Religion	58 (8.3)
D	Development/Economic	169 (24.2)

E	Education/HRD	22 (3.2)
F	Environment/Conservation	29 (4.2)
G	Ethnography/Sociology	23 (3.3)
H	Geography/Geology	50 (7.2)
I	Maps/Cartography	17 (2.4)
J	Mountaineering	35 (5.0)
K	Politics	81 (11.6)
L	Population	43 (6.2)
M	Science/Research	8 (1.1)
N	Travel/Tourism	68 (9.8)
O	Miscellany	52 (7.5)
Total		697 (100.0)

Source: New ERA, September 2007

Table 2: Harka Gurung: Chronological Bibliography

Year	Items	Year	Items
1957	3	1981	15
1958	6	1982	18
1959	8	1983	24
1960	7	1984	12
		1985	11
1961	3	1986	14
1962	4	1987	17
1963	3	1988	17
1964	3	1989	28
1965	4	1990	32
1966	4	1991	18
1967	11	1992	28
1968	17	1993	10
1969	10	1994	8
1970	11	1995	10
1971	5	1996	20
1972	7	1997	8
1973	9	1998	10
1974	4	1999	31
1975	8	2000	42
1976	5	2001	31
1977	3	2002	25
1978	5	2003	40
1979	8	2004	40

1980	16	2005	25
		2006	18
		2007	21
Total	164		533

Source: New ERA, September, 2007

His important books organised by theme are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3: HARKA GURUNG: Books with major themes

Theme	Name of the book
Mountaineering	1968. <i>Annapurna to Dhaulagiri: A Decade of Mountaineering in Nepal Himalaya, 1950-60</i> . Kathmandu: Department of Information
Development Planning	1. 1968. <i>Regional Development Planning for Nepal</i> . Kathmandu: National Planning Commission 2. <i>1972 Graduates in Nepal: A Diagnostic Study</i> : Kathmandu: NPC 3. 1984. <i>Nepal: Dimensions of Development</i> . Kathmandu: Sahayogi Press 4. 2005. <i>Nepal Regional Strategy for Development</i> . Kathmandu: Asian Development Bank
Travelogue	1980. <i>Vignettes of Nepal</i> . Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan
Cartography	1983. <i>Maps of Nepal: Inventory and Evaluation</i> . Bangkok: White Orchid Books
Political Economy/Nature/Culture	1. 1986. <i>Kehi Abhibyakti (Some Expressions)</i> (in Nepali) Bensisahar, Lamjung 2. 1989. <i>Nature and Culture</i> . Kathmandu: Ms. Saroj Gurung
Demography	1. 1989 <i>Regional Patterns of Migration in Nepal</i> . Honolulu: East west Population Institute 2. 1998. <i>Nepal: Social Demography and Expressions</i> . Kathmandu: New ERA
Adibasi/Janajati	1. 2004 <i>Janajitiko Sero-phero (In the World of Nationalities)</i> . (in Nepali): Kathmandu: Nepal Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) 2. 2006 <i>Nepal Bibliography of Indigenous Peoples (Janajati)</i> (with K. Bhattachan). NEFDIN
Ethnicity	1999. <i>Faces of Nepal</i> (with Jan Salter). Kathmandu: Himal Books
Inclusion/Exclusion	2006. <i>From Inclusion to Exclusion</i> . Kathmandu: Social Inclusion Research Fund

Though Dr. Gurung had a Ph.D. degree in geography, his writings crossed disciplinary boundaries, including contributions to sociology, anthropology, population, economics, history, political science, development studies and so on. Table 1 shows that his writings spread over 15 thematic areas. He has written more on development/economic fields (24.3%), followed by politics (11.0%) and travel/tourism (9.8%). If themes like language/religion and sociology/ethnography are combined, these are the second most frequent, (11.0 %) like politics. This clearly demonstrates that he was a prolific writer and spent his whole life writing on various themes in social science.

He began writing from during his student days in Patna University and published two articles in local journals there. The first article relates to his impression of Patna, while the second is a poem related to the Ganges River. Since then he hardly ever wrote poetry. Since 1957, he had some publications every year till his death, and in some years he had up to 42 publications in a year to his credit. In the later stage of his career, he started writing books and articles on caste, ethnicity and social movements, giving due emphasis to the rights of the Adivasi/Janajati groups of Nepal. This also reflects his inner feelings and closeness being from an Adivasi/Janajati group and his growing distaste of the ruling elite, particularly the Brahmins and Chhetris of Nepal.

I worked together with Dr. Harka Gurung on several projects, mostly associated with New Era. Once I also accompanied him on a field visit in the Upper Arun valley for about a week. I observed him closely during this field trip and I found him to be not only a voracious reader of books (he used to read one book the whole night and the next morning he would pass me the same book to read), but also an excellent field worker. He always listened to people carefully, even though his dialogues with people were brief. Like a field anthropologist, he would make notes in his diary about what he had seen and observed in the field every day. His daily diary describing his daily work routine and impressions of what he had seen and observed will be an important source of information for those researchers who want to know more about him.

Dr. Gurung's scholarship was always based on facts. Though he frequently criticized the quality of the statistical data available in Nepal (particularly the Central Bureau of Statistics), he used these statistical data extensively in almost all of his articles, reports and books. In fact, his writings always included tables or statistics.

Though he was trained in the British model of functional geography, he gradually shifted his position from static, synchronic analyses to diachronic, processual ones. His writings paid great attention to the historical processes and internal dynamics of society over time. In the past his approach was oriented more towards a survey type of research where he made extensive use of statistical analyses (*Internal migration in Nepal*, 1989, and *Internal and international migration in Nepal*, 1983, co-author). On the other hand, he

was a good observer and traveller. As a geographer and mountain chronicler, he travelled different parts of Nepal, and he recollected many of his memories in his book, *Vignettes of Nepal* (1980).

Considering his vast number of books, monographs and articles, if I were to compile a list of the most important and significant books and articles by Dr. Gurung, the job would be immensely difficult. This is because when I start reading them, I find that each of his publications was based on data (both primary and secondary) with sound logic, reasoning and methodology. Below, I briefly highlight some of his important writings (books and reports) and how he presented his ideas as a great scholar in various social sciences.

The book *Vignettes of Nepal* (Sajha Prakashan 1980) is divided into 20 chapters with a bibliography, a glossary and an index. The book has 19 maps, 44 colour plates and 58 black and white photographs. The book is essentially a travelogue and introduces the readers to his journey across different parts of Nepal: the snowy mountains, the hilly regions, criss-crossed by a maze of streams and rivers and adorned with beautiful lakes and delightful valleys. In addition to the description of varying landscape, there are rich anecdotes on local history and lore, the economy and cultures of diverse ethnic groups. There are vivid descriptions of geology, flora, fauna, festivals and subtle observations on the changes that are taking place in rural Nepal. However, he is also clever to note his biases towards his discipline and use of such words throughout the text. He writes, "the profusion of words like ridge, valley, ascend, descend, climb, steep and traverse are a reflection both of my geographical bias and the rugged terrain of the country" (p. vii). This book was written during a difficult time in his life when he was implicated in a court case of a political nature (Carpet scandal).

The Monograph/Report *Internal and International Migration in Nepal* (Main Report, National Commission on Population, Singh Durbar, Kathmandu, 1983) was jointly prepared by the 9- member of the study team (four geographers, two sociologists and three economists) and Dr. Gurung coordinated the overall study and the writing. The study focused on the Kathmandu valley (Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts) and the Tarai districts (Jhapa, Morang, Siraha, Parsa, Dahnusa, Mahottari, Nawalparasi, Rupendehi, Banke and Kanchanpur). The field study was completed in about three months. The main topics included not only basic data on national and international migration but also a study of the international border, internal migration, labour and citizenship. The interesting findings of this study are:

1. According to interviews with the heads of households conducted in the Tarai districts, 6.9 per cent were immigrants. In this calculation it was observed that over the last 25 years (between 1958-1983), the annual growth rate of immigrants in Nepal was 4.2 per cent.

2. Interviews conducted with the heads of households in the Kathmandu valley showed that 2.9 per cent were immigrants.

Of the many recommendations made in the report, two recommendations were most important.

1. Border regulation between Nepal and India; and
2. Foreign workers working in Nepal should obtain a "work permit" to work in Nepal

Because of this report, many "Madhesi people" of the Tarai were not happy with Dr. Harka Gurung and some even proposed to hang him when the report was publicly released. Today, everybody realizes that he was a "true nationalist" as he was very careful to note the illegal entry of Indian nationals into Nepal under the guise of local Madhesi people of the Tarai.

The book, *Nepal: Dimensions of Development* (Kathmandu, 1984 & 1989, pp 322 pages with 20 figures and 58 tables), has 22 chapters, and is a collection of writings spread over the last 15 years published in various journals such as *Vasudha*, *Industrial Digest*, *Population and Development*, and so on. In totality, the volume deals with various aspects of development in Nepal. The articles include journalistic forays, conference papers and inaugural addresses and many seminar presentations and articles focused on population, spatial planning and the ecological problems of Nepal.

In the book, *Nature and Culture, Random Reflections* (Kathmandu, 1989) the author wants to bridge the gap between the social sciences and natural sciences from the perspective of a "holistic view of things". The book is a collection of 25 articles published in various journals over the last three decades as a student (1960-64), teacher (1964-65), planner (1968-78), politician (1975-78) and the freelance consultant (1980-1989). The book is divided into four major themes: Himalaya (6 articles), Landscape (7 articles), Society (8 articles) and Political Culture (4 articles). The book is indeed a great contribution to those who are interested in understanding the different social and natural dimensions of Nepal and their interrelationships.

The book, *Nepal: Social Demography and Expressions*, published by NEW ERA (1998) is a pioneering book about the sociology and demography of Nepal. As the title of the book suggests, there are two major parts: Social Demography and Expressions. Part I - Demography has five chapters that deal with population, migration, ethnicity, language and religion based on the 1991 census data. In Part II- Expressions, another five chapters deal with topics such as education and elitism, ethnicity/caste and politics, regionalism and elections, and development and ideology based on the data of the 1991 census and various other sources such as the Election Commission, the World Bank. Chapter Ten of this section "State and Society" is a reprint of his previous article published in *Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal* (1997) edited by David Gellner et.al. This book is very useful for students of sociology,

anthropology, population and political science as it furnishes good comparative data on the situation of various ethnic/caste groups in Nepal, a demographic account of growth and the redistribution of population and the political representation of various ethnic/caste groups in relation to other groups and their level of development in Nepal. Numerous tables and appendices provide the reader with a good source of material. Throughout the book, Dr. Gurung attempts to show that Adivasi/Janajati groups in Nepal are socially, economically and politically backward compared to groups like the Brahmin, Chhetri and Newar. He thus feels that the demands of Adivasi/Janajati for equal participation and representation in various socio-economic and political sectors of Nepal is well justified. In his preface, he aptly remarks that "Ethnic politics in today's Nepal is both an expression of primordial aspiration and a process of people's transition from subjects to citizens. What is now being contested in the socio-political arena will determine the formation of the nation." In other words, inclusion of various groups (such as the Adivasi/Janajati and Dalit) is a must for the overall development processes of Nepal. In the latter stage of his life, he expressed these ideas in several forums and published a couple of articles on these themes.

The book, *Janajati Serophero (In the world of Nationalities)* (Kathmandu: Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, 2004), is restricted to issues dealing with the indigenous nationalities of Nepal. There are 21 provocative articles in the Nepali language on different themes. Most of the articles published in the book relate to Nepal's post-1990 democratic revolutions. Though the book claims to deal with the world of Adivasi/Janajati, there are at least four articles which exclusively focus on Gurungs only such as "Gurung Jati Bare" (About the Gurungs), "Tamujati: Auta Manthan" (Tamu Jati: Some Discussions), "Tamu Sankritiko Jagerna" (Protection of Tamu Culture) and "Gurung Bare Auta Thakali Katha" (A Thakali story about the Gurung). Other articles include "Gorkhali-ko Chinari" (Introduction to the Gorkhali people), "Kuro Sanskrit Karkapko" (Sanskrit talk used under pressure), and so on. One of the major arguments raised by Gurung in this book is about the origin of the Gurung themselves. He feels that there is a lack of scientific evidence about how the Gurungs were divided into the "Char Jate" (four groups) and "Sora Jate" (sixteen groups) Gurungs. He neither believes in the Brahmanical model which relates to the origin of Gurung as having Hindu blood nor the Western version which suggests that the community have Tibetan blood. He feels that more in-depth research is required to understand the origin of the Gurungs in the context of Nepal. This clearly suggests that the history and origin of many Adivasi/Janajati groups of Nepal is blurred.

The booklet, *Trident and Thunderbolt: Cultural Dynamics in Nepalese Politics* is based on a lecture delivered by Dr. Gurung, which was an

inaugural lecture is the Mahesh Chandra Regmi lecture organised by Social Science Baha, 24 April 2003 on "The Agenda of Transformation: Inclusion in Nepali Democracy". He argues that the monopolistic policies of the Hindu state over the last 235 years have marginalized various groups in different ways. The three major groups of contenders who are marginalized by the state are : (i) Janajati (ethnic peoples) on the basis of culture, (ii) Dalit (untouchables) on the basis of caste and (iii) Madhesis (Tarai) on the basis of geography. He offers ethnic/cultural events from 1770 to 1964 from various Janajati groups who contested for space within the state. Finally, Gurung suggests some areas for intervention for the upliftment of groups such as the Janajati, Madhesi and Dalit.

The last book before his death was *From Exclusion to Inclusion: Socio-Political Agenda for Nepal* (Kathmandu: Social Inclusion Research Fund, 2006, pp. 50). In this book he considers social inclusion/exclusion as the socio-political agenda of various groups of people in Nepal. He argues that there is educational and political inequality and economic deprivation among various groups and that there thus needs to be an agenda of social inclusion for these communities. He notes that Nepal, with its high-caste patrimony, has always remained averse to progressive measures on equality (p. 47). That is why the social inclusion of groups like the Adibasi/Janajati is mandatory for any kind of development model in Nepal.

Discussion and Conclusion

Dr. Harka Gurung was a true family man who loved and deeply respected every member of his family. As he was more interested in natural landscape than giving Hindu or Buddhist names to his children, he named his two daughters Himalchuli and Manasulu, and one son Sagarmatha. He dedicated his book, *Vignettes of Nepal* (1980) to his two daughters (Himalchuli and Manasulu) and two sons (Bikas and Sagarmatha). The book, *Nepal: Dimensions of Development* (1984) was dedicated to his father (Subedar Parsai Gurung) and the other book, *Nature and Culture* (1989), to his mother (Mayishebo Gurung). The publisher of most of his books was his wife Ms. Saroj Gurung. He acknowledged his wife in most of his writings and admitted that she accompanied him through even the most difficult parts of his life with courage and fortitude.

Dr. Gurung is no doubt one of the most accomplished Nepali scholars to date in the history of Nepal. His breadth of interest was unusual and his productivity at this stage of his career stage was virtually unparalleled among any Nepali scholars to date. He has conducted research and published on a range of issues encompassing some of the earliest and best travelogues, best ethnographic descriptions of various Nepali ethnic groups, assessments of the politics of ethnic identity in Nepal, and population-related themes ranging from fertility to migration. Beyond geography, his writings vary enormously

in contents. Some writings are closer to history, some to sociology and anthropology, political science, economics or development studies. Some of his writings are purely descriptive while others are highly analytical. This diversity is both a strength and a weakness. It is strength because so many sources of knowledge come together in the field that it continually sparkles with new ideas and thoughts. There is also a weakness in such writings, as diverse efforts make a subject weaker in its own areas.

While Dr. Gurung was in fact not particularly interested in developing theories of social sciences in general, at the same time he was quite good at developing models. His models of "regional development" based on five development regions, and a proposal to divide Nepal into 25 districts are very well taken by Nepali scholars and planners even today. He was a true nationalist. As a team leader of the project on migration, he proposed two things if Nepal hoped to develop in the future: the border between Nepal and India must be regulated and a system of work permits should be introduced to foreign workers in Nepal. The latter stages of his writing can be counted on understanding, and often representing, the indigenous or "native" point of view. In other words, he played the role of a "cultural broker," in mediating between the government and the Adivasi/Janajati groups of Nepal for their upliftment and development. He noted that the underdevelopment of many Adivasi/Janajati groups was closely related to the social and political constraints of the wider Nepali Hindu social structure. Unlike many Nepali scholars, he always read and cited books which focussed on Nepal; in fact, his study room at home can aptly be described as a 'Nepal Collection'.

Dr. Gurung had a lifelong passion for travel, an inner desire for adventure and facts which ultimately led to his tragic death in the soil of a remote region of Nepal Himalayas. He will be remembered in the history of Nepal as a planner, teacher and renowned academic.

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OLD AND NEW BARRIERS TO FAMILY PLANNING IN HUMLA, NEPAL: HOW THE URBAN/RURAL DIVIDE HAS WIDENED

Apryle Pickering
Kimber Haddix McKay

In Nepal it is better to have smaller families. There are fewer problems. In the village most women were having four to five children but now people are realizing that fewer children is better and they are adopting family planning. In the past we had no choice, we had to keep producing –Humli woman, now residing in Kathmandu

Nepal stands out among countries experiencing a demographic transition because it is the poorest country in the world undergoing the transition, and because fertility levels are dropping without any formal governmental pressure or family planning policy (Caldwell 1998). Comparison of data from the 2001 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey with earlier surveys conducted in Nepal indicate that fertility has declined steadily from 5.1 births per woman in 1984-1986 to 4.1 births per woman in 1988-2000 (NDHS 2002). There has been an 18 per cent decline in fertility among women under the age of 30, with the largest decline occurring between 1992 and 1997 (NDHS 2002). National scale survey data show broad patterns throughout the period of transition, but other tools can advance our understanding of the pace and character of fertility transitions, and how changing fertility strategies are understood, motivated and perceived by individual Nepalese women. Utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative data from fieldwork completed in Nepal in 2004, we show how women in rural Nepal continue to experience barriers to contraception and in fact that obstacles to controlling fertility are increasing for women in Humla District, a rural region in Nepal's northwest corner. The rural/urban divide that impacts access to contraception in Nepal has broadened dramatically since the Maoist insurgency began in 1996, and the drastic differences among rural and urban women in terms of education and access to family planning are now exacerbated by the presence and behavior of the Maoists and Army. Conditions in rural Humla, Nepal where the Maoist presence is heavy are producing a situation in which family planning is now virtually impossible for many women.

Availability of health care in Humla

In Nepal, the quest for good health is occurring in the context of the tremendous stress and anguish people are experiencing during the civil war.

Nepal's insurgency started in 1996 and sharply increased in intensity after the 2001 Royal family massacre. By 2005, Nepal had found its way into the ranks of the world's worst humanitarian and human rights disasters (Amnesty International 2005; Global IDP Project 2005). To date, nearly 20,000 people have been killed, 150,000-200,000 are internally displaced, and an estimated 1.8 million have fled the country (CBC News 2004; Douglas 2005; Global IDP Project 2003). People living in the countryside have been terrorized for five years, caught between the army and the rebels, forced to feed both sides from already insufficient food supplies, and unfairly named, beaten, or killed for 'supporting' one side or the other. Abduction of children for use as soldiers or as human shields, and forceful recruitment to mass rallies are two common ways that villagers are physically drawn into the conflict. Many unwilling rally participants have lost their lives from helicopter strafing by the army, and countless girls have been abducted and raped or used as sex slaves by both the Maoists and the army (Douglas 2005; Gersony 2003). Individuals employed by the government, most importantly for this project all government health workers, have fled villages in Humla due to the risks posed to them by the insurgency. As a consequence, villagers have no regularly available person to turn to for allopathic, 'western' medical treatment of the health problems that plague them today as much, if not more than ever before¹, nor to sources of reliable, safe, effective contraception. In the past, Humlis had two sources of health care, health care resources, and contraception: the national health care system and the projects funded by private non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Neither of these options is currently available to most Humlis. Villagers are cut off from the national health care system by the fact that they often can not travel to Simikot in safety. On top of the already-daunting challenge of the several-days long walk over mountain passes separating many villages from Simikot, villagers now live in fear of abduction, violence, or other consequences of the suspicion with which the then Royal Nepal Army (RNA) and the Maoists treat people traveling from one place to the next. In fact, every Humli needs written permission from the local Maoist cadres in order to even leave their village. Because the Maoists are usually in hiding, it is often very difficult to find anyone to even ask for such permission.

The other source of hope on the health care horizon has been the efforts of the private organizations involved in health care delivery to Humlis. However, with the exception of one small organization focused on smokeless stoves, latrines, solar lighting and safe drinking water systems, all NGO and INGO activity in the district has been halted by the Maoists. Nearly all Nepali and foreign NGO activity is limited at present to Simikot, which is heavily armed and protected by the local RNA base, but is inaccessible to many villagers for the reasons discussed above.

Following the work of previous students of Nepalese fertility (e.g. Axinn 1993; Folmar 1992; Haddix 2001; Stash 1999; Tuladhar 1987), we examined some of the issues surrounding current Nepalese contraceptive usage by comparing the experiences of a group of urban Nepali women with the experience of a group of Humli women, with special attention to barriers to contraception facing Humli women today that have emerged as a result of the ongoing insurrection.

Study Design

The data presented in this paper were drawn from the 2001 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS, 2002) and on field research conducted between June and August 2004 in the capital city Kathmandu.

Figure 1: Map of Nepal with Kathmandu and Humla indicated



Source: <http://geography.about.com/library/cia/ncnepal.htm>

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 50 women between the ages of 22 and 59 (mean age = 33), of two communities currently residing in Kathmandu, and were supplemented with participant observation and open-ended group discussion. The two groups of women interviewed consisted of ethnic Tibetans from the remote Humla District of northwestern Nepal, who have fled the Maoists and their villages to reside temporarily in Kathmandu, and urban Newar women, descendants of the autochthonous inhabitants of the Kathmandu valley. All interviews were conducted with the help of native research assistants in English, Tibetan or Newar. Snowball sampling was used to construct the Newar sample. For the Humli sample, we met with all willing women from Humla residing in Kathmandu at the time of the

fieldwork. Interviews were conducted in homes or place of business with the interview translations taking place during the interview by the research assistant. All answers were recorded manually as the interviews proceeded. For the purpose of comparison between a rural and an urban population, we designated the ethnic Tibetans of the Humla District as 'rural' population since the Humli women we interviewed were all recent arrivals in Kathmandu and because they were being queried about their experiences accessing health care and family planning in their villages. Despite the fact that they were aware of the lacking health care options in their villages, most of the Humli women hoped to return to their villages when the Maoist conflict subsides and did not perceive of Kathmandu as a likely or acceptable place for permanent settlement. We considered the Newar women of Kathmandu 'urban'. University of Montana Institutional Review Board approval for this project was obtained prior to the beginning of fieldwork, and a confidentiality plan was instituted to protect the identities of all participants.

Theoretical Framework

It is well known that during the 1960s and 1970s the world began to experience a major decline in fertility with the onset of rapid fertility transitions in a majority of developing countries. The decline in fertility reopened a debate about the causes of fertility transitions, and that debate continues to this day. In fact, questions about why humans shift from large to small completed family sizes have motivated generations of scholars interested in population patterns, resource use and human evolution. Many attempts have been made to identify the mechanisms driving fertility transitions, yet precise identification of these mechanisms remains an elusive goal. Understanding the causes of the European fertility transition of the late 19th century, for example, has proven to be a major challenge to historical demographers, and no single explanation, applicable across countries (or groups within countries) is unproblematic. Notestein's early conceptualization of the demographic transition held that the positive changes brought about by modernization (especially in medical technology and its effect upon survival, occupational opportunities for men and women, and the value of children) inevitably drives fertility down (Notestein 1953). Since then a number of related positions have been developed by theorists attempting to further define Notestein's original argument. These can be separated into demand and ideational theories, and we highlight the primary positions influencing this project below.

On the demand side of the debate over fertility transition are positions such as Easterlin's new home economics model (1975), and Becker's human capital models (1975; 1991). These models of fertility change emphasize the value of children within households, the costs of raising children, and the

costs of limiting fertility. Such models carefully identify the economic evaluations that individuals can make in fertility decisions, and assume that the resulting calculus is within the purview of each decision-maker. In contrast, ideational theories like those developed by Freedman (1979), Lesthaeghe (1982), Lesthaeghe and Wilson (1986), Mason (1986), and Bongaarts and Watkins (1996) move away from the importance of material considerations and emphasize the effects that social and attitudinal forces have on fertility, in particular the importance of the powerful association drawn between modernity, affluence, and small family sizes. Bongaarts and Watkins' identification of the conditions in which early innovators in fertility regulation can have a domino effect throughout a region is one of the strongest positions in the literature to date in favor of ideational processes in demographic patterns. Their position is presaged in Caldwell's (1982) wealth flow models, which bridge demand and ideational approaches. Caldwell's argument started with the straightforward assertion that decisions about the production of children are contingent upon their value to parents. When children are perceived to be costly and to provide few benefits to their parents, fertility will be modified so that parents produce few children. This argument was later broadened with the suggestion that the perceived costs and benefits of children may be material, or they may be social (see for example Caldwell and Caldwell 1998).

In other words, collectively adopted *perceptions* of the costs and benefits of children sometimes determine reproductive behavior, irrespective of actual material conditions. Bongaarts and Watkins illustrate the mechanisms through which changing perceptions can be shaped and shared among members of a social community in their analysis of Watkin's social networks data from Luos in Kenya (Bongaarts and Watkins 1996). The assertion that social factors, in particular those influencing the perceived rather than actual costs of children, influence the total fertility rate, was an important departure from the basic assumptions of the then-influential demand theories of the fertility transition, since those theories are predicated upon the idea that fertility behavior, though shaped by social norms, is ultimately contingent upon the actual, material costs and benefits of children to their parents.

Many learned scholars of Nepalese fertility patterns predate our work, and we intend to add to the work of Stash with women of Chitwan (1999), Axinn et al (1991), Fricke (1997) and Fricke et al's (1993) with Tamang, and Folmar's (1992) work with caste Hindus of west central Nepal, each of which contributes importantly to refining our understanding of how small scale socio-economic and socio-ecological differences shape fertility preferences and behavior. In our work, following Bongaarts and Watkins (1996), we were interested in understanding how changing perceptions of the costs of children and changing perceptions of the costs of contracepting, were being influenced by the ongoing insurgency. Below we describe the patterns

differentiating rural and urban women and explore some of the different motivational patterns to contraception existing between the two groups.

Current Fertility Patterns

In Nepal there are many dramatic differences between urban and rural populations with respect to fertility. The 2001 NDHS showed that the total fertility rates (TFRs) for urban and rural Nepali women were 2.1 and 4.4, respectively (see Table 1). The 2001 NDHS also showed that among urban women, fertility rates decline rapidly after the age of 24, while in rural areas fertility decline is more gradual and delayed. Urban Nepali women appear to almost completely cease childbearing by age 40. The median birth interval is slightly longer for births in urban areas and the percentage of women who begin childbearing under the age of 20 in rural areas is double the rate in urban areas.

Table 1: Urban vs. Rural TFR, Median Birth Interval, and Teen Childbearing

Area	Total Fertility Rate (TFR)	Median number of months since preceding birth	Percentage of teens who have begun childbearing
Urban	2.1	32.3	12.6
Rural	4.4	31.8	22.5

Source: NDHS 2002.

The ethnographic and micro-demographic analyses of the experience of women we interviewed revealed other interesting differences between urban Newar women and the rural Humlis in our sample. In terms of nuptiality there were only small, statistically insignificant differences between our Humli and Newar informants (age at marriage of 21 and 22 years, respectively). However several interesting differences emerged when we looked closely at the fertility data. The first birth interval was significantly longer for the Humli women at 3.8 years, compared to the Newar first birth interval of 2.0 [$t(39)=2.41$; $p=.02$]. This is likely due to the practice in Humla of delaying a new bride's move out of her natal household for up to two years after marriage (Haddix 1998). While rural women waited longer to begin having children, once they began having children, subsequent birth intervals are significantly shorter than those of the urban Newar women, with average interbirth intervals of 2.9 and 4.2 years [ANOVA $P=.008$ $f(1,25)=8.39$]. Rural Humli women also reported that 82 per cent had never used contraceptives during the period before the insurrection began, and no one could access contraception just prior to their migration to Kathmandu. While access to contraception was already poor for Humli villagers in the period before the insurrection, the possibility of spacing births or attenuating

the reproductive period with contraception was gone completely once the insurgents had destroyed the health care infrastructure. In sum, our data showed that the rural Humli women were waiting slightly longer to have children than their Newar counterparts, but go on to have them at shorter intervals and, unlike Newar women, show little evidence of being able to effectively control childbearing once some target fertility had been reached. The findings mirror those of Haddix (1998) and Haddix McKay's (2000) studies of Humli fertility, contraceptive prevalence and health care.

NDHS Family Planning Data: Urban vs. Rural

NDHS (2002) data show that some knowledge of family planning is nearly universal among Nepalese women and men. The contraceptive prevalence rate among currently married Nepalese women is 39%, and there has been a dramatic increase in the use of contraceptives during the last 25 years (NDHS 2002). Despite this increase, there continues to be considerable need for family planning services in the rural areas. Of currently married women in Nepal, 28 per cent report unmet need for family planning services. Of those women, 11 per cent report a need for spacing and 16 per cent have a need for contraception to cease further childbearing. The greatest need for family planning, however, is in the remotest rural populations such as Humla, where unmet need is even higher than that reported in NDHS (2002). According to NDHS (2002) the percentage of urban women using any modern method of contraception is 56.3, while among rural women it is only 33.2; among our Humli informants there is at present no reliable source whatsoever for contraception and contraceptive usage approaches zero in the villages.

Of the 25 rural Humli women in our ethnographic sample, 82 per cent had never used contraception of any kind, and all women reported that since the insurrection began, all of the sub health posts in their villages were closed or burned to the ground. They also observed that traveling for contraception to Simikot was a risky venture undertaken by very few women, due to the possibility of harassment, capture, or worse by the Maoists or the Army. Previously, contraception was available at the District health post, but this was an 8-16 hour walk that was seasonally dangerous and always an inconvenience. In contrast, 19 of the 25 urban Newar women stated that they were currently using one of various methods, and none reported disruptions to their ability to acquire contraception when needed after the beginning of the insurrection.

Tuladhar (1987) describes the links in Nepal between contraceptive use in the rural setting and the availability and accessibility of the family planning services; these factors directly influence women's ability to make choices about their fertility. Even before the insurrection began, Stash found that in southern Nepal, efforts to promote family planning programmes encountered many barriers, including the lack of rural health-care infrastructure, modest

government budgetary allocations and a terrain that hinders the delivery of clinical and surgical contraceptive services and supplies (1999). Our interviews with local women revealed that these barriers are a significant reason for the differences in contraception usage among rural and urban women in Nepal. Occasionally, in the era before the insurrection began, contraceptive services were available in the villages from traveling assistant nurse midwives (ANMs). But, as stated by one rural villager, this did not alleviate the bind in which they found themselves: "Family planning in the village was so hard. Sometimes there were shortages after you'd walked days to get the shot. Also the women in the villages that give them [ANMs] sometimes do not give them right and we would get sick." Another woman simply observed, "I had so many children because I didn't have family planning." By contrast, access to contraception was not an issue for our Newar informants. Even after the insurrection began, there were numerous clinics and hospitals throughout Kathmandu supplying family planning services. Our Newar informants reported that they freely discussed their options with their husbands and doctors.

"Most people think men become weak when sterilized, that they cannot do heavy work. But ... women have to go all the way to Kathmandu and many cannot afford it."

— A Humli woman

Humli women cite other reasons for not utilizing family planning services. For instance, many women complained that in the villages they had little choice as to the methods of contraception available, and the kinds available had extreme side effects. Weakness was a commonly reported side effect. "Village women have hard heavy work, we cannot afford to be sick from family planning", said one Humli woman. Local infections from contraceptive injections were reported as well as other adverse reactions. Without the ability to switch to other methods or types of contraception, Humli women had no choice but to endure the side effects or rely on natural methods; either option undermines their faith in the fit between contraceptives and their own bodies.

Humli women were also much more likely than their Newar counterparts in our sample to complain that they were not able to obtain their husband's approval to contracept. Their husbands were concerned about child mortality, and they could not afford to travel to the city to get reliable contraception that would not sicken their wives. These concerns were not mirrored in the experiences of the urban Newar women in our sample. Fear of side effects and other health concerns, along with the inadequate availability of contraception also appeared in the 2001 NDHS data seen below in Table 2.

Table 2: Main Reason for not Using Contraception

	Infrequent/ no sex	Menopause/ hysterectomy	Subfecund/ Infecund	Wants more children	Knows no method	Knows no Source	Health Concerns	Fears side effects	Other	Total % (n)
Newar	4.8% (2)	2.4% (1)	40.0% (17)	4.8% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	14.3% (6)	26.2% (11)	7.1% (3)	100% (42)
Humli	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	10% (1)	40% (4)	30% (3)	10% (1)	10% (1)	0% (0)	100% (10)
Total	3.8% (2)	1.9% (1)	32.7% (17)	5.8% (3)	7.7%(4)	5.8%(3)	13.5% (7)	23% (12)	5.8% (3)	100% (52)

Source: NDHS 2002.

Both Newar and Humli women were concerned about the side effects of contraceptive use, with 26.2% of the Newar women and 10% of the Humli stating fear of side effects as a reason for not using contraception. Humli women were however much more likely to report that they either did not know of a modern contraceptive method (40%), or they did not know where they could get contraception (30%).

There is no question that the insurrection has gravely impacted Humli women's ability to access health care; in addition to these issues, our Humli informants reported other disturbing trends. Despite the fact that the mean age of our sample was 33, an age after which Humli women would traditionally, have had more children, nearly 20% of them said that the insurrection had changed their notions about ideal family size. Some said bluntly that they did not want any more children, because the risk of them being abducted or otherwise involved in the violence of the insurrection was too high. Of a slightly smaller sample of 22 Humli women interviewed in detail about the impact of the insurrection on their family, 77% of them said that they were afraid that one of their children would be abducted by the Maoists, and in fact, 3 women (14%) had had at least one child taken by the Maoists. Currently, we are undertaking a new study of the impacts of the insurrection on the mental and physical health of Humlis and the trends we can see above will be examined in more detail.

Education and Fertility

In addition to the access issues described above, education is known to figure prominently in contraceptive usage and fertility decline/limitation in Nepal. Recent theoretical and empirical work in this area highlight the possibility that an individual's schooling experience will influence their fertility decisions, as well as the possibility that pressures to educate children will influence couples' fertility decisions (e.g. Axinn 1993).

According to NDHS (2002) data, a higher per centage of urban Nepali women attend school, and urban women obtain higher levels of education than the women of the mountain areas, such as Humlis (see Table 3).

Table 3: NDHS 2002 Highest Education Level

	No education	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total Per cent (n)
Newar	46.9% (199)	20.5% (87)	27.4% (116)	5.2% (22)	100% (424)
Mountain People	90% (18)	5% (1)	5% (1)	0% (0)	100% (20)

Source: NDHS 2002

This pattern was also evident among the women we interviewed. While it was common for Humli parents to send their sons for some schooling, girls receive very little if any education at all. This mirrored findings of other studies of Humli culture and child rearing patterns (e.g. Haddix 1998). In contrast, among the urban Newar women in our sample, 88% had some education and fully 84% went on to obtain college level degrees.

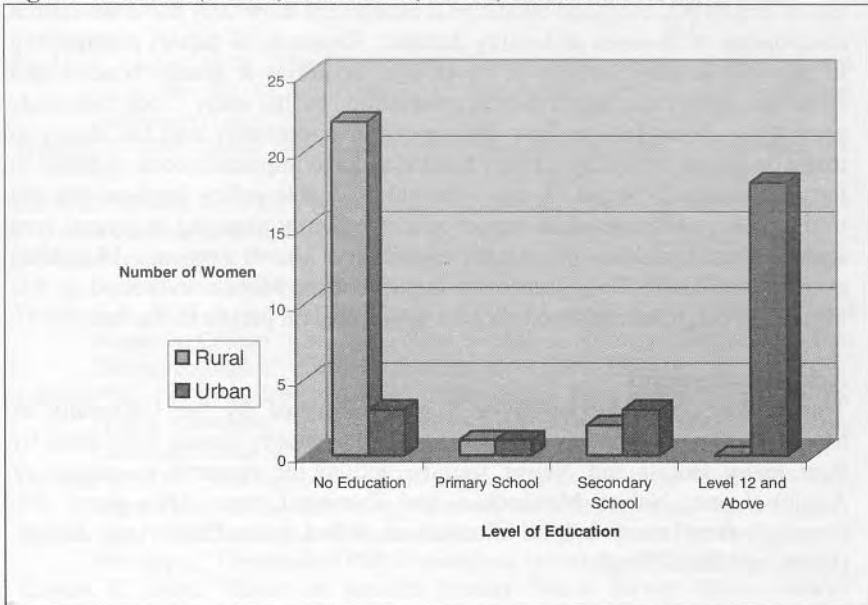
Table 4: Rural vs. Urban Level of Education in Nepal 2004

	No Education	Primary School	Secondary School	Level 12 and Above	Total
Rural	22	1	2	0	25
Urban	3	1	3	18	25

Source: NDHS 2002

Figure 4 and Table 4 demonstrate the dramatic differences between the two groups with respect to education. Currently, the situation is even more aggravated. Like Humla's health posts, all schools have been closed by the Maoist cadres inhabiting the region.

Figure 4: Rural (Humli) vs. Urban (Newar) Education Levels



Lacking education in Humla reflects the generally low level of socio-economic development in the region; it also underscores the plight of women with respect to fertility limitation. Women often complained to the authors about feeling foolish, stupid or uncivilized compared to high caste, urban medical practitioners, who are regarded as superior and whose treatment is not questioned. Due to illiteracy, women can not read the directions on their pill packets nor information that might otherwise be provided to them to help them determine proper usage of the products. The general scenario is one in which women feel disempowered and even degraded by the mere thought of questioning the doctor at the District health post. ANMs are considered to be more approachable, but for reasons discussed above, are not regarded as reliable sources of contraception.

Conclusion

A pattern in which urban women effectively access contraceptive services while their rural sisters languish in villages without healthcare or access to family planning is not new; but the severity of access problems in Humla even before the insurrection began is notable, and the total loss of ability to access any family planning services once the insurrection began warrants further consideration and attention.

The differences between rural and urban Nepali women with respect to their use of family planning and educational attainment show why these are central components to theories of fertility decline. Research on factors contributing to ongoing fertility declines in developing countries is greatly needed, and anthropologists can make a critical contribution to this study. This case study provides a closer look at how differences in opportunity and the ability to make decisions regarding fertility limitation have impacted recent patterns in fertility decline in Nepal. It may also hold valuable policy implications due to the strong evidence of an unmet need for family planning in a rural area such as Humla, and the gross under-education of Humli women. More than ever before, due in large part to the impacts of the Maoist revolution on life in rural Nepal, it is crucial to bring the needs of rural people to the fore.

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Note

1. Including but not limited to diarrheal and upper respiratory track disease, tuberculosis and pneumonias, anemia and malnutrition, congestive heart failure and birth complications (Haddix 2000, Haddix McKay 2003, 2005).

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POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN NEPAL: IMAGE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMPOSITION*

Krishna Hachhethu

Stage: Final contest of *Gaon Khane Kathā* (a riddle competition) 2061 (2004).

Actors: Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya (two famous comedians) with Narendra Kansakar (as umpire).

In the opening scene of the play, the two riddle contestants, Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya, are very enthusiastic. Then they make pretensions to walk out after they hear the announcement of the prize: a *netā* (leader). '*Ganaune* (stinky) *neta*!' is their immediate reaction. However, they change their minds and become all excited when the umpire (Narendra Kansakar) makes it clear that the prize is '*swacha chabi ko* (clean image) *neta*'. They remark that in the absence of *swacha chabi ko netā*, the country is heading from one bad situation to a worse one, so that it will end up in the *masān* (the cremation ground). They express their hopes in the song lyric sung by Narayan Gopal: *Eutā mānche ko māyā-le kati pharak pardacha jindagi mā* (one person's love makes a difference in life). Similarly, a (clean) leader can make a significant difference in the country's present sad predicament.

This comedy scene is, I believe, reflective of the feelings of the common people relating to three fundamental questions of party leadership in Nepal. First, the figure of political leadership in the imagination of Nepali people; second, the frustrations of the people with the party leadership; and third, the people's desire for an effective leader capable of resolving the crisis in the country.

This crisis has further deepened in a most intractable way as a consequence of the revival of the royal regime. Though reestablished only in 1990, democracy was forced to collapse, after its second experiment of under fifteen years, by King Gyanendra's assumption of executive power for monarchy in October 2002. This culminated with his seizing absolute power in a *coup d'état* on 1 February 2005. This is reminiscent of the short-lived first experiment with democracy in the 1950s that was similarly dismantled in December 1960 by the late King Mahendra, father of present King Gyanendra. After 30 years of monarchical rule, a system of multiparty democracy was reinstated in 1990 through a successful mass movement, popularly known as *jan andolan*. Before the democratic process attained

maturity, the multiparty system faced the serious challenge of an armed insurgency by the Communist Party of Nepal or CPN (Maoist). Whether or not the CPN (Maoist) will succeed in their goal, their struggle has been used by the palace as an excuse for replacing democracy with the royal regime.

The present political and constitutional impasse contributing to this catastrophic situation can be seen as the outcome of a combination of three factors. First, failure of the parties and leadership on multiple fronts including governance; second, the ongoing armed insurgency by the CPN (Maoist) since February 1996; and third, the seizing of power by King Gyanendra in October 2002 and again in February 2005. One may argue that King Gyanendra's act of taking power back was a reaction to the failure of political parties to tackle the Maoist insurgency. It is, I firmly believe, rather mainly a product of the King's own ambition. Weak parties and leadership just contributed to the King's ambition and the palace's ploy to return to the centre of power. The monarchy and the Maoists are beyond the scope of this paper. To glance at the current state of affairs is, however, relevant since the leadership factor is one of the important parts of the political developments in the post-1990 period.

This paper analyses three key questions concerning the political leadership of Nepal. The first part describes the massive changes in the image of party political leaders from great men to moral degenerates. The second part of the paper explains the post-1990 political environment as a potential source or constraint to the leadership of the Prime Minister (PM). The third part relates to leadership structure in terms of caste/ethnic composition.

Image Change

To begin with the construction of leadership in the imagination of the Nepali people, let us refer to the above-mentioned comedy scene once again in which *swacha chabiko neta* was portrayed with five distinct characteristics: uncontaminated, dedicated to people's cause, committed to fight corruption, devoted to development, and capable of restoring Nepal's lost image as a peaceful country in the world. A pilot survey with 171 respondents (21 central level leaders, 100 local leaders and 50 commoners) also reveals that leadership is primarily conceived as requiring a 'good human being'. The second important quality of leadership is 'visionary' according to central leaders, 'party organizer' in the views of local leaders, and 'dedicated to development' according to commoners. Besides, other important ingredients of leadership as identified by different types of respondents are intellectuality, sacrifice and a commitment to ideology (Baral, Hachhethu and Sharma 2001: 104-110).

As there is little written on party leadership in Nepal aside from a few biographies, the portrait of leadership projected in the comedy-sketch and unearthed by our pilot study can be taken as source materials. Hence, what

Nepalis understand about the leadership is reflected in the trait theory of leadership.¹ Leadership is generally understood as the possession of special qualities and character by individuals, which differentiate them from the common mass and enable them to influence, control and manage an organization. Trait based studies suggest leadership qualities as personal attributes e.g. persistence, passion, conviction, integrity, courage, vision, integrity, trust, curiosity and daring.

Perception of leadership as a great man or heroic personality was built in the historical context that invariably dates back to the origin and evolution of political parties in Nepal. Nepali political parties originated in the background of struggle against the oligarchic Rana regime. The party's image as an agent of change in the political realm through the anti-Rana movement expanded to social and economic spheres as well in the post-Rana period. During the first experiment of multiparty democracy (1951-1960), Nepal attempted to break away from its past and looked forward to political freedom, economic development, social justice, the spread of education and communication.² Political parties led a campaign to abolish the land-based feudal social and economic system. The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) - a parent organization of all communist parties of Nepal - while introducing Marxist ideology to Nepali politics through participation in liberal democratic processes, sought a radical and revolutionary transformation in Nepali society (K.C. 1999). The dominant party at that time was Nepali Congress (NC), which adopted the ideology of democratic socialism. The NC government (1959-1960) under Prime Minister (PM) B.P. Koirala took a number of progressive social and economic policy measures directed against the system of land-based feudal exploitation. This explains why political parties and leaders of Nepal have been acknowledged as agents of change in the social, economic and political structures of the country.

Even during the period of the Partyless Panchayat regime (1960-1990), parties' images as agents of change was retained, but mainly in the political sphere. Since party activities were legally prohibited, political parties concentrated on building public opinion against the authoritarian panchayat system rather than on mass mobilization through public policy platforms. Because of their tireless struggle and sacrifice against the partyless panchayat system, political parties and leaders have become synonymous with multiparty democracy and as agents of change. The credentials of parties and leaders as symbols of democracy was further boosted on account of the NC and the ULF (United Left Front, comprised of seven splinter left groups) being the catalysts of the 1990 *Jana Andolan* (mass movement), which overthrew the three-decade long partyless authoritarian panchayat system and restored multiparty democracy.

Leadership is the human face of the party which largely represents the party's values, ideology, policy and programme. The image of the leaders of Nepali political parties, except those of Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), has been built on the ground of their long struggle and sacrifice for causes and principles. Their contribution to the early phase of democratic transition, notably in the restoration of multi-party system and transformation of sovereign power from the palace to the people by means of the new constitution of 1990, was highly appreciated. Thus some parties and their leaders gained enormous popularity. It was manifested by the results of all three parliamentary elections and two local elections held in the post-1990 period that the NC and the Communist Party of Nepal, Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) – the two major partners of the 1990 *jan andolan* – emerged as the largest parties of Nepal.

On account of historical factors, the demand for leaders with great qualities was elevated by a national mood in the post-panchayat phase. The initial post- *jan andolan* period was an euphoric phase characterized by parties' lofty promises and people's expectations of change everywhere. This is not unique to Nepal as is the case in most Third World countries. In developing countries, there is generally a demand for strong leaders owing to their transitional nature comprising of two dominant characteristics. First, the people aspire for a better life after any political upheaval. Second, faith in a strong leader rather than an institution is usual in such societies, notwithstanding the validity of divine right of the King, or the authority of the colonial masters is challenged.

Michael Brecher's survey reveals that a Prime Minister with 'effective' and 'strong' leadership qualities was desired in India even 20 years after its independence (Parry 1969: 71-78). This exemplifies the case in Third World countries. When a nation is brimming with enthusiasm, competent men are more in demand. It is believed that "leadership arising out of revolutions will have a transforming character (Blondel 1978: 89). In most Asian cultures, leaders are expected to be nurturing, benevolent, kind, sympathetic figures who inspire commitment and dedication" (Pye 1985: 28). Like in other Third World countries, Nepali people in post- the *jan andolan* period, wanted a leader with transformative qualities.

But the Nepali people's hope in their leadership has gradually turned into frustration and consequently the perception has changed. This is an accumulative effect of the post-1990 political developments. Unlike the smooth transition in the early period of the 1990s in setting up democratic institutions, i.e. making of the constitution, holding elections, formation of the parliament and an elected government; democracy in its functional attributes, overwhelmed by power-centric intra-party and inter-party conflicts, was widely perceived as being eroded.³ This was manifested in the instability of the government. The first elected majority government of the

NC led by Girija Prasad Koirala collapsed before its prescribed five year tenure due to internal conflicts within the ruling party. After the 1994 mid-term election, the UML formed its minority government under PM Man Mohan Adhikari but collapsed after nine months and all succeeding governments survived for only short periods. During the hung parliament (November 1994 - May 1999), Nepal experienced seven different governments and coalitions. This politics of making and breaking the government led to a number of divergence in the party system of Nepal, i.e. the intensification of power-centric intra-party conflicts, the defiance of party leadership, the disintegration of parties, horse-trading of members of parliament (MPs), manipulation of constitutional loopholes, political interventions by the palace and the court, etc. The return of a one-party majority government of the NC after the 1999 parliamentary election was of no help either in changing the political scenario or in the situation brought by the leaders of the government thrice before the party formally split in May 2002. A deteriorating political situation was evident in a number of developments between 1991 and October 2002. The House of Representatives (HoR) was dissolved six times, special sessions of the parliament were summoned seven times, and the government changed eleven times.

The party system and the leadership that evolved post-1990 were failing to link democracy with good governance and delivery of service to the society. Rather, parties and leaders concentrated more on power politics and self-aggrandizement, breaching democratic values and norms, which in turn intensified political instability, anarchy and chaos. The disappointment with parties and their leadership was well manifested in a nationwide survey conducted in August-September 2004.⁴ Fifty-seven percent of the respondents said that they were dissatisfied with the way democracy worked in Nepal. Their dissatisfaction was manifested in several areas in response to a number of questions.

- 61 % felt that citizens did not enjoy equal rights.
- 58 % felt that not everyone is free to speak one's mind.
- 77 % disagreed with the statement that food, clothing and shelter were available to everyone.
- 46 % said that the national economy has worsened compared to a few years ago.
- 56 % said that the increase in corruption is an outcome of failed democracy.
- 55 % said that their place of living was comparatively unsafe than a few years ago.
- 94 % observed an increase in political instability post-1990.

Leadership was perceived as the main reason for the fall of democracy. The same survey revealed that people's faith in parliament and political parties was lower than other state institutions. Ninety-five percent of the surveyed respondents felt that political leaders were involved in personal and party interests rather than in the national interest. A previous study revealed that the leadership of both central and local levels realized that the decline of credibility in their political leadership was mainly because they were perceived as 'selfish and corrupt', that there was a 'gap between their promises and performance' and that they were 'promoting valueless and normless politics' (Baral, Hachhethu and Sharma 2001: 121). Their realization, however, did not change to substantial reforms. Consequently, people's perception of leadership changed from that of a great man to *ganaune* (stinky).

PM and Political Environment

While it is true that personal (in)ability and attributes of leaders matter but this is only half the story. The other half lies in the circumstances in which a leadership has to function, so it is important to understand the reasons behind the successes and failures of a leadership. A situational theory of leadership argues that leaders are prisoners of their environment, and they can do only what the environment permits them to do. Rober Elgie (1995: 13) suggests that "Presidents and Prime Ministers operate within a framework of complex institutional structures, historical forces and societal demands. These institutions, forces and demands collectively comprise the leadership environment". This paper will now focus on the leadership of the prime Ministers of Nepal as conditioned by political environment.

Prime Ministers of Nepal, 1991-2002

S No	Prime Minister	Party/Parties	Period	Dates
First Parliament (1991-1994)				
1	Girija P. Koirala	NC majority	43 months	26/5/91– 28/11/94
Second Parliament (1994 -1999)				
2	Man M. Adhikari	UML minority	9 months	29/11/94 – 10/9/95
3	Sher B. Deuba	NC-RPP-NSP coalition	18 months	11/9/95 – 11/3/97
4	Lokendra B. Chand	RPP-UML-NSP coalition	8 months	12/3/97 – 5/10/97
5	Surya B. Thapa	RPP-NSP-NSP coalition	6 months	6/10/97 – 25/3/98
6	Girija P. Koirala	NC minority	5 months	26/3/98 – 26/8/98
7	Girija P. Koirala	NC-ML-NSP coalition	4 months	26/8/98 – 2/12/98
8	Girija P. Koirala	NC-UML-NSP coalition	5 months	23/12/98 –26/5/99

Third Parliament (1999 – 2002)				
9	Krishna P. Bhattarai	NC majority	10 months	27/5/99 – 9/3/00
10	Girija P. Koirala	NC majority	28 months	10/3/00 – 22/7/01
11	Sher B. Deuba	NC majority	14 months	23/7/01 – 4/10/02

The 1990 constitution of Nepal adopted the British and Indian model of parliamentary democracy. This parliamentary system is known as the cabinet system and places the position of the PM as *primus inter pares*. This parliamentary system is therefore called the prime ministerial system. Being the highest state authority, the PM is the key person in the parliamentary system.

British and Indian experiences suggest some important points and conditions for the parliamentary democracy to be able to operate by means of a prime ministerial system. The first point is the personal and institutional capability of the PM to manage the system. Second, it is essential that the head of the state – the king in a monarchical country and the president in a republican state – must limit his/her formal power to encourage, advise and warn the government. Third, the post of the PM should be held by a top leader of the ruling party so that he/she can command the leadership of both the government and the party; or there should be a system by which the elected party's wing gains ascendancy over the organizational apparatus. Fourth, the government should be responsible to parliament - implying a consideration of opposition voices - when making major policy decisions. The opposition, in turn, should not fall prey to power before the next election in order to insure the stability of government. Does Nepal have such conducive conditions and practices?

Limited Government

The key political institutions and environment - that could be both resources and constraints - in which the PMs of Nepal worked in the pre-October 2002 are: the constitution, the monarchy, the party and the opposition. Though the constitution provided a parliamentary system, it was framed adopting Locke's principle of limited government in many ways. First, the constitution placed the king as a 'semi constitutional monarch' with a role in extra ordinary situations i.e. dissolution of parliament, emergency and mobilization of army. Second, the constitutional provision of "Constitutional Committee", "Judicial Council" and "Security Council" that were constituted by the members of other forces besides the government curtail the executive privilege of the government. Third, the provision of ratification by a two thirds majority of the parliament on certain matters such as declaring an emergency, major foreign policy decisions and constitutional amendments also imposed several limitations on the government.

Other political environments conditioning the PM that appeared in the course of this exercise and experiment were the lack of responsibility of government vis-à-vis the opposition, an obstructive opposition and a lack of unity and cohesion in parties - particularly when they were in power. Moreover, Nepal's situation is different from the UK and India in two other aspects. First, unlike the head of state of the UK and India, Kings of Nepal are ambitious. The army has always been loyal to the monarchy rather than the political parties. Second, the Communist parties play a very influential role. The following sections offer a brief illustration of how the PMs were conditioned by some key political institutions and environment.

Problems Within

The ruling party could be a major resource or a main constraint to the authority of the PM. In countries where democracy is advanced, certain mechanisms have developed to convert the party's strength into a PM's asset. Two main reasons that have been responsible for a cohesive Party-government relation in Western and other South Asian countries are:

- (a) The PM or President generally holds the leadership of both the government and the party. In the case of a division of leadership in two fronts, the formal post of party leader is generally given to a less influential person.
- (b) Western countries and India have developed a system – through long practice and tradition – by which the party organization usually plays a subordinate and supportive role to the elected leaders.⁵ Nepal's experience is different. As a result the PM's power and authority was strictly limited by his own ruling party.

All the major parties - NC, UML and RPP - had the historical experience of working under a system of collective leadership. Since the death of its charismatic leader B.P. Koirala in 1982, the NC built up a system of troika leadership which comprised of their top three leaders G.M. Singh, K.P. Bhattarai and G.P. Koirala, and the superstructure of the party enjoyed absolute power in taking decisions on behalf of the party. Collective leadership in the UML, similar to RPP, was established on the basis that it was a unified party of several splinter groups. The party's top-ranking leaders were more or less in the same order in terms of age, political career and competency. The RPP is also a unified party of two groups, each led by former PM L.B. Chand and S.B. Thapa (Thapa recently formed a separate party), and the ranking of leaders in the party more or less replicates their position in the past under the panchyat system.

A system of collective leadership in the ruling party could be a resource for the PM if it were to operate cohesively, but this was not found in Nepal during the democratic period (1990-2002). Instead, the practice of collective

leadership became the source of internal conflict and factions and contributed negatively to the capacity of the PM. Moreover, the prevalence of collective leadership impeded the move towards a system of ascendancy of the elected leader over an organizational leader. The dominance of the organizational wing of a party persisted for several reasons. Leadership of the organizational wing was mostly held by a prominent personality rather than one from the elected body. The party central committee took final decisions on matters such as disciplinary action and the selection of candidates for elections. A study of 245 out of the total 265 members of parliament (MPs) of both Houses revealed that the power to take major decisions both in and out of parliament rested with the party central committee (Hachhethu 2004). In any given situation, the PM has to depend on the support of the organizational leader of the ruling party, but relations between the party leader and the PM have always been strained. Worst of all, conflicts between the organizational leader of the ruling party and the PM intensified to the extent that most of the governments post-1990 eventually collapsed. Examples include:

- The NC government led by G.P. Koirala collapsed in July 1994 because of the absence of 35 dissident MPs during a vote on the government's annual policy and programme. Krishna P. Bhattarai was the party president during the time.
- The NC-led coalition government under PM S.B. Deuba collapsed in March 1997 due to the absence of two NC MPs in a vote of confidence. The party president was Girija P. Koirala.
- The RPP led coalition government under PM Lokendra B. Chand collapsed in June 1997. The party president was Surya B. Thapa.
- Krishna P. Bhattarai resigned from the post of PM in March 2000 owing to the passing of a no-confidence motion by 113 members of the NC in the HOR. The party president was Girija P. Koirala.
- The NC government led by Sher B. Deuba collapsed in May 2002 due to the party's decision to oppose the PM's proposal to extend the state of emergency. The party president was Girija P. Koirala.

In other instances of the downfall of the government, e.g., the UML-minority government of October 1995, the RPP-led coalition government of March 1998, and the NC-majority government of July 2001 – the internal problems of the respective ruling party were not a decisive factor. The leaders of these governments, Man Mohan Adhikari, Surya B. Thapa and Girija P. Koirala, were the presidents of their respective parties at the time. The PM enjoyed greater leverage while holding principal post in the party organization as well. During these times, internal conflicts manifested in other ways. Disobeying the party establishment eventually resulted in party splits as shown by the divisions in the RPP in January 1998, the UML in March 1998, and the NC in May 2002.

The leadership of the PM, despite being the highest post in the parliamentary system, had become weak and circumscribed by the politics of hung parliaments and power equations within the ruling party/parties. The personality of the post-1994 prime ministers was overshadowed either by a system of high command of coalition parties (constituted outside the purview of the state apparatus but working as steering committee taking all important decisions of the government) or by the imposing nature of the second man in the cabinet: (deputy prime minister Madhav Nepal and Bam Dev Gautam during the government formally led by PM late Man Mohan Adhikari and Lokendra Bahadur Chand for instances). All governments under hung parliament were obsessed with survival crisis and the main concern of all PMs was to retain the post as long as possible rather than consolidation of one's own leadership by providing effective and strong government.

Obstructive Opposition

Opposition party could be a resource or constraint to the PM depending on relations between the treasury and opposition party. Except for a short period when the UML was in power, the communists were in the opposition and the NC was in the government. The communist parties had usually taken radical position vis-à-vis the government. In the beginning, the anti-communist image of the first elected PM G.P. Koirala fueled the opposition in taking hard position and obstructive roles. The UML declared its strategy of opposition from *Sadak dekhi Sadan samma* (from street to parliament). Calls for *bandhs*, violent street agitation, boycotting of public programmes attended by the PM and ministers etc. were some of the ways adopted by the UML in alliance with other communist parties. The UML chose non-parliamentary venues to display its oppositional role. Such a pattern of resorting to street agitation politics was adopted time and again. For instance, all opposition parties completely boycotted the whole session of parliament (February-April 2001) demanding the resignation of the then PM G.P. Koirala as the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority implicated the involvement of the PM in corruption in the Lauda air deal. Such a manner of stiff opposition hindered the PM.

Some change was noticeable between the government and opposition relations from the time of hung parliament, shifting the key venue from the street to the parliament in taking decisions on major issues. However, it did not help in strengthening the PM's position. The main target of the opposition, whichever party that would be, was to pull down the PM from his post. At the time when Sher B. Deuba was the PM (in 1995-97 and in 2001-2002), a politics of consensus between the government and opposition appeared and consequently the Mahakali treaty with India and extension of emergency were passed by the parliament in September 1996 and February 2002 respectively. These were, however, exceptional cases since the

dominant trend of oppositional politics was directed at weakening and discrediting the sitting PM. The opposition parties had a tendency to cultivate internal division within the ruling party with the help of negotiations with the dissident faction of the ruling party. Such unholy alliances between the opposition and the dissident faction of the ruling party proved detrimental to the power and position of the PM.

- In 1994, a secret understanding was made between the UML and organizational leaders of the ruling NC party (G.M. Singh and K.P. Bhattarai) to oust the then PM G.P. Koirala.
- In July 1994, the MPs of opposition parties and dissident MPs of parliament jointly gave a petition to the king requesting to refuse PM Koirala's recommendation of dissolution of the HOR.
- In July 1995, the NC along with other opposition parties petitioned the Supreme Court against the then UML government's decision of dissolving the HOR. This trend was followed in subsequent events whenever the sitting PM dissolved the HOR, i.e. in 1997 by the then PM Surya B. Thapa and in May 2002 by the then PM Sher B. Deuba.
- In 2002, G. P. Koirala (president of the ruling NC) and the UML leaders united for a national government to replace the Deuba led NC majority government.

Ambitious Monarch

The post-1990 PMs -- who had been conditioned by intense intra-party factional conflicts and non-cooperation by the opposition parties -- had several constraints in dealing with the king. The PM's reliance on the palace increased as much as he faced a survival crisis from his own party and from the opposition parties. The PM's dependency on the palace quite visibly increased particularly since the military became involved in countering the Maoist insurgency. How the palace responded and reacted to the emerging political scenario became a vital point vis-à-vis power and authority of the PM.

The king's roles became crucial for four major reasons. One, late King Birendra's consent to the 1990 constitution -- which reduced his position from absolute ruler to semi-constitutional monarchy -- did not surface with conviction. Instead he was forced to promulgate it by the post-1990 mass movement.⁶ Two, despite formal reduction of the king's position, the 1990 changes were limited in political and legal structures. The popular forces were able to capture elected bodies, i.e. local government, parliament and government, but the domination of royal trustees in leadership of other state organs i.e. court, bureaucracy, police, army, constitutional bodies etc. remained unchanged. Three, the history, culture and tradition of the country also influenced the mindset of Nepali elites, including party leaders, while

considering the palace as one of the power centres of Nepal despite formal transformation of sovereignty from the king to the people by the 1990 constitution. Fourth, the constitution itself allocated the position of monarchy beyond just a figurehead vesting with him some discretionary, prerogative, and preventive powers, though ambiguously, which meant that the king could play a crucial role in times of crisis, e.g. dissolution of the HOR, emergency, and mobilization of army. The military has always been loyal to the monarchy and not to the political parties.

How the palace responded and reacted to the emerging political situations is clearly manifested in King Gyandendra's acts of taking power back in October 2002 and February 2005. Even before these events, the palace manipulated the emerging situations intra and inter-party conflicts which weakened the PM's position – in order to expand its power bases. Even late King Birendra – attributed as a low profile king after his tragic death – had slowly but steadily taken power back. His decision and wish prevailed more in nomination of members of National Assembly and *Raj Parishad*, in appointment of the head of constitutional bodies, ambassadors and other high-ranking posts, pointing to the curtailment of the PM's executive powers (Hachhethu 2000: 90-116). By manipulating the Supreme Court, the palace tactically disarmed the PM from his right to dissolve the HOR. The late King Birendra's action was confined to spread the palace's tentacles by manipulating the conflict ridden politics. But King Gyanendra, succeeding the throne in June 2001 after the royal massacre clearly indicated his ambition to become an absolute monarchy. He successfully used PM Sher B. Deuba, the leader of splinter group of the NC, to do away with formal political structures by dissolving the HOR and not extending the life of local elected bodies which eventually paved the way for the revival of the royal regime since October 2002.

Summing up of the background of the revival of the royal regime is in account. The post-1990 PMs were constrained by the development of a number of adverse situations. First, the power centric intra-party conflicts in the ruling party had continued to weaken PM's position. Two, the position of PM was devalued considerably in the second parliament, featured by hung parliament and coalition politics. M.M. Adhikari was *de jure* leader and S.B. Deuba was junior leader in their own parties. While Adhikari held the PM's post of the UML minority government, Deuba led a coalition government of NC, RPP and NSP (1995-1997) and the NC majority government (2001-2). The leadership of RPP in two successive coalition governments from March 1997 to April 1998 and its proximity with the palace had its own implication for weakening PM's role vis-à-vis the monarchy. Thirdly, post-1999 PMs' dependency on the king increased as a consequence of the intensification of the Maoist activities for which the government wanted the mobilization of army. The constitutional provision of keeping the military away from the

jurisdiction of the cabinet and the loyalty of the army to the monarchy limited the PM's power in a crisis situation. Fourth, both the NC and the UML—while in opposition—formally requested the king to disarm the PM from his prerogative to dissolve the parliament. All the above-mentioned factors had an accumulative effect in weakening the PM's power and position vis-à-vis monarchy.

Leadership Structure

The problem of democracy, party and leadership in Nepal is also discussed in another perspective, beyond personal attribute of leaders and leadership environment. A number of ethnicity-centric writings on Nepali politics⁷ point out deficiency of party leadership in terms of its caste/ethnic composition. Considering the elitist nature of Nepali politics dominated by the high caste Hindus - the Brahmin and Chhetri - ethnic based studies hit hard on the fact that party leadership could not become a reflection of "social integration" and "a coalition of socio-economic cleavages", which showed a narrow social base of leadership in Nepal.

Caste/Ethnic Composition of Members of HOR and parties' Central Committee

Caste/ethnicity total number	House of Representatives*			Parties' Central Committee**					
	1991 205	1994 205	1999 205	NC 29	UML 46	RPP 41	JM 38	NSP 29	NWPP 9
Brahmin	37.6	42.0	37.6	62.06	65.21	19.51	44.73	-	22.22
Chhetri	19.1	19.5	20.5	10.34	10.86	31.70	7.84	-	11.11
Newar	06.8	06.3	06.8	3.44	13.04	4.87	10.52	-	66.66
Hill Ethnic Groups	15.2	12.2	14.7	13.79	6.52	26.82	21.05	-	-
Tarai Communities	21.0	20.0	19.5	10.34	4.34	17.07	5.26	100	-
Others	2.9	2.0	2.5	-	-	-	10.52	-	-
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: * IIDS. 2000. *The Fourth parliamentary Election*. Kathmandu: Institute for Integrated Development Studies. ** Lok Raj Baral, Krishna P. Khanal and Krishna Hachhethu. 2002. "Responsiveness of Nepali Political System". (Unpublished Report)

The table shows that the leadership at central level in both parties and parliament, except the NSP and the NWPP, corresponded to the paradigm of 'dominant hill Bahun-Chhetri' and 'minorities *janajati*, *madheshi* and dalit'. Some previous studies (Baral, Hachhethu and Sharma 2001; Hachhethu 2002) and a recently completed survey of 800 activists of different fields also confirmed the domination of the hill high caste groups in the leadership structure. The caste ethnic breakdown of 120 political activists (21 central and 89 local leaders) out of total 800 surveyed activists are: hill

Brahmin/Chhetri (42.7%), hill ethnic group including Newar (19.1%), tarai group including Musalman (26%) and others (10%). The available data of party leadership structure clearly demonstrate that the advent of multiparty democracy did not make any difference on the domination of one particular group in power structure of the country. In the past, during the party-less regime, the people of hill high-caste groups and the well-to-do families held most of the panchayat posts from village to national level.⁸ Several factors work for the continuation of domination of the high-caste hill groups in the power structure of the country.

The main reason behind the ascendancy of the hill caste group over other ethnic communities in Nepali politics relates to social stratification of the people of the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal into four groups- *Brahmin*, *Chhetri*, *Vaishya* and *Sudra*- as prescribed by the Hindu scriptures. In the ascendancy order, Brahmins and Chhetris are placed at the top with their high ritual position: Chhetris as the ruling class and Brahmins as the priests and the advisors to the rulers.⁹ Although the Civil Code of 1963 legally abolished a system of caste domination and discrimination, the hill high castes have retained their dominance over the political power structure throughout the history of the country.

Critics of elitist composition of party leadership in Nepal ignored several other factors which explain why it is so. It is widely acknowledged and empirically confirmed that most party leaders all over the world are drawn disproportionately from group of a higher socio-economic background.¹⁰ In India, the people from high caste groups and the big land-holding class have dominated the composition of party leadership.¹¹ The leadership of political parties in Pakistan and Bangladesh is largely constituted by those people who have traditionally enjoyed power and influence by virtue of their higher position in the social settings, their economic power based on big land holdings and other financial assets, their family and kinship ties, and also their cultivation of connections with local administrative officials (Berman 1983; Golam Hoosain 1984; Rashid and Kader 1997).

The history of elite formation in Nepal also witnessed the primacy of political factors in the recruitment of political leadership (Hachhethu 2002). The political contribution made by party activists is the most important aspect for their emergence as party leaders. In a country like Nepal, where political parties originated from and evolved around the democratic movement, a person's record of political struggle and sacrifice is considered more important in the recruitment of leadership. It is the political background of a person rather than his/her social status, which is a criterion for the attainment of leadership position. Generally, party leadership is recruited from those who have long association with the party organization. Seniority in service to the party is an important asset for promotion to leadership position.

The ethnic factor had, however, its role to play in electoral politics, albeit less in voting behaviour but more in party leaders' mind and perception. Leaders' perceptions of ethnicity and election made them imperative in giving due weight to caste/ethnic factors of electoral constituencies. Parties' accommodation to minorities through elections is reflected by the fact that the *Janajati* and *Madheshi* had greater representation in parliament than in the parties' Central Committees. One study revealed that though the leadership in Nepali political parties at the highest level are elitist, it is broad-based and representative of diverse social elements at the local level (Hachhethu 2002: 94).

Although critics of Nepal's elite structure have either knowingly or unknowingly ignored the complexity of leadership building, this does not mean that one should be blinded to the deficiencies of party representatives. The more the party leaders constitute diverse social elements, the larger the party's social base. The heart of pluralist theory of elite – democracy as consistent with the existence of multiplicity of elites – as illustrated by Geraint Parry (1969) is, therefore, well taken by several academicians and ethnic activists of Nepal. For inclusive democracy with proper caste/ethnic representation in the political power structure, several proposals are in the offing, i.e. proportional electoral system, federalism, autonomy, and reservation.

Conclusion

Coming back to the matter of leadership in the changed context of the revival of the royal regime since October 2002, the arguable question is: will the political parties and leadership come up with different ways from that of the past in the post-1990 period? Parliamentary parties launching democracy resurgence movement have observed the masses' indifference in the recent conflict between the king and parties. It is not because people support the royal regime. Contradictory to King Gyanendra's claim of his actions as per people's will and aspirations, democracy surveys in Nepal clearly demonstrate people's commitment to democracy despite their dissatisfaction with the way democracy was handled by parties between 1990 to 2002. Nearly two-thirds of surveyed respondents said "democracy is better in all circumstances" and 79 per cent affirmed the suitability of democracy in Nepal. The reason why the people at the moment are not responding to the parties' call for participation in democracy resurgence movement is that they have not proved anything worthwhile in the immediate past, from 1991-2004.

It seems that parties and leaders now realize that they need to rebuild their lost credibility in order to enhance mass mobilization. The comedy-sketch presented in the beginning of the paper has a clear message – that people no longer want power wielders. They are looking for real leaders. Parties and leaders should also pay attention that a system of semi-constitutional

monarchy is obstructive to the promotion and consolidation of democracy as proved in the past. Besides, democracy would take root only if the leadership structure is inclusive. To talk and discuss about reconstruction of an effective leadership, rejection of semi-constitutional monarchy, and inclusive democracy along with leadership reflecting social diversity is extremely important. In doing so, the roles of parties and leadership become vital once again. How near or far is the destination? The answer lies in the extent the parties are willing to go to in order to enhance their capability of mass mobilization in the ongoing democracy resurgence movement.

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Notes

1. The classical elite theorists like Pareto, Mosca, Harold Lasswell etc. strongly emphasized the personal quality of individual in leadership positions. See for Pareto, Mosca and Lasswell's approaches of leadership in Peter Bacharach, *The Theory of Democratic Elitism: A Critique*, London: University of London Press Limited, 1969.
2. For detailed about party politics in 1951-1960 see Anirudha Gupta, *Politics in Nepal: A Study of Post-Rana Political Development and Party Politics*; Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1964; Bhuwan Lal Joshi and Leo E. Rose, *Democratic Innovations in Nepal: A Case Study of Political Acculturation*, Berkely: University of California Press, 1966.
3. For details about the Nepali politics in the post-1990 period, see Lok Raj Baral, *Nepal: Problems of Governance*. New Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1993; Lok Raj Baral, *The Regional Paradox: Essays in Nepali and South Asian Affairs*. Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2000; Michael Hutt, ed., *Nepal in the Nineties*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994; Martin Hoftun, William Raepers and John Whelpton, *People, Politics and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1999; POLSAN, *Political Parties and the Parliamentary Process in Nepal: A Study of the Transitional Phase*. Kathmandu: Political Science Association of Nepal, 1992; Ole Borre, Sushil Raj Pandey and Chitra Krishna Tiwari, *Nepalese Political Behaviour*. New Delhi: Sterling, 1994; Dhruva Kumar, ed., *State, Leadership and Politics in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, 1995; Dhruva Kumar, ed., *Domestic Conflict and Crisis of Governability in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, 2000; T. Louise Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*. Routledge, 1996.
4. A survey on democracy in Nepal was conducted, from August 6 to 20 September 2004, in 163 polling stations (31 in urban and 132 in rural areas) that spread over 39 parliamentary constituencies of 38 districts. The survey was based on probability, three stages, and systematic random sampling in selection of both the

sample frame and the size. It was carried out using a structure questionnaire administered through face-to-face interviews with a nationwide sample of 3,249 respondents. For full details see Krishna Hachhethu, *State of Democracy in Nepal: Survey Report*, Kathmandu: SDSAN/International IDEA, 2004.

5. For party-government relations in the Western countries, see Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair, eds., *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*. London: Sage Publication, 1994; for Indian experiences, see W.H. Morris-Jones, *Parliament in India*. Delhi: Longmans Green and Co. Ltd., 1957; articles in James Maner, ed., *Nehru to Nineties*. New Delhi: Viking, 1994.
6. The objectives of the 1990 mass movement were limited to lift the ban on political parties and to form an interim government, but the popular forces successfully expedited their demands, in the post- movement interim period, up to the point for transformation of sovereignty to the people. For details, see Krishna Hachhethu, "Mass Movement 1990", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 2, July 1990, pp 177-201; Krishna Hachhethu, "Transition to Democracy in Nepal: Negotiation Behind Constitution Making, 1990", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 1994, pp 91-126.
7. For ethnic aspects of Nepali politics and elite formation, see, Frederick H Gaige, *Regionalism and National Unity in Nepal*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1975; David N. Gellner Jonna Pfaff-Czarnecka, and John Whelpton (eds). *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal*. Amsterdam: Harwood academic publishers, 1997; Prayag Raj Sharma, "Ethnicity and National Integration in Nepal: A Statement of the Problem", *Journal of Nepalese Studies*, Vol.1, July-December 1987, pp.23-30; "How to Tend This Garden", *Himal*, May/June 1992, pp.7-9; Harka Gurung, "Representing An Ethnic Mosaic", *Himal*, *Op.Cit.* pp. 19-21; Dilli Ram Dahal, "Ethnic Cauldron, Demography and Minority Politics: The Case of Nepal" in Dhruva Kumar (1995) *Op.Cit.* 8, pp.148-170; Krishna B. Bhattachan, "Ethnopolitics and Ethno- development: An Emerging Paradigm in Nepal" in Dhruva Kumar (1995), *Op.Cit.* 8, pp.124-147; Ananta Raj Poudyal, "Nation Building in Nepal: A Case Study of the Post Revolution Period 1950-1981" (Unpublidhed Ph.D.Thesis), Kathmandu: Tribhuvan University, 1986; "Nepal: Ethnicity in Democracy" in Lok Raj Baral, ed., *South Asia: Democracy and the Road Ahead*, Kathmandu: POLSAN, 1992; "Nation, Nationalism and Some Issues of National Consensus", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Vol.18, No.1, January 1991.
8. See for leadership pattern at local level during partyless panchayat system, L.S. Baral, "The First Panchayat Elections in Nepal, 1962-63: The Emergence of A New Political Generation", *International Studies*, Vol.12, January-December 1973; Lok Raj Baral, "Village Politics and Development: A Study of three Village Panchayats" (Unpublished Memo), Kathmandu: CNAS/TU, 1978; "Nepal: Local Politics and Some Trends of Social Change", *Indian Journal of Nepalese Studies*, Vol.1, July-December 1987, pp.31-40; Lionel Caplan, *Administration and Politics in a Nepalese Town: The Study of a District Capital and its Environs*, London: Oxford University Press, 1975; Pashupati Shumsher J.B. Rana and Mohammad Mohsin, *A Stud Report on the Pattern of Emerging Leadership in Panchayets*, Kathmandu: CEDA/TU, 1967; R.S. Chauhan, *The*

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9. Such a religion based hierarchical social structure was legally reinforced and strictly practiced as state protected ideology with the enactment of Civil Code 1854 which further classified several caste and ethnic groups into three broader categories in ascendancy order: (a) *Tagadhari* (sacred-thread wearing castes, Brahmin and Chhetri) at the top (b) *Matwalis* (alcohol drinking castes and ethnic groups) in the middle, and (c) *Asudha ra Achhut* (impure and untouchable castes) at the lowest position. For understanding of stratified hierarchical social setting of Nepal in diverse perspectives, see, P.R. Sharma, "Nepali Culture and Society: Reflections on Some Historical Currents" in Kamal P. Malla, ed., *Nepal: Perspectives on Continuity and Change*, Kathmandu: CNAS/TU, 1989, pp.139-68; Dor Bahadur Bista, *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization*, Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1991.
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CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL: IN SEARCH OF REALITY

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Background

In recent years 'Civil Society' has become a slogan for sociologists, political scientists and policy makers both in the western and non-western world. The discourse on the modern concept of civil society in Nepal is fairly new despite age old existence of civic practices. But those civic practices of civil society based on traditional voluntarism were of different kind endowed with different responsibilities and can hardly be equated with the current notion of civil society - which is more political than social in content. That was a civil society with limited civic sphere, engaged in indigenous activities which contributed little towards citizenship building. The reason being that civic space was either pre determined or restricted by the state due to primitive political structure based on parochial thinking.

The Third Wave of democratization that swept away undemocratic regimes worldwide in fact led to the worldwide growth of civil society. In most cases the wave itself was the repercussion of worldwide civic resurrection that could not be contained within the borders of nation states. And Nepal could not remain an exception of this worldwide civic upsurge. In fact the rise of current notion of civil society after 1990s 'modest' political change in Nepal is the manifestation of this worldwide civic upsurge. This worldwide civic upsurge took place not only because of Third Wave of democratization but also because of adoption of liberal people centric (people first) policies both in politics, economics and development by the nation-states. Moreover, the UN decade of conference¹, that is, conferences/seminars/conventions/summits that took place in 1990s under the UN banner has provided ample opportunities for the growth of modern civil society organizations (CSOs) worldwide. These world conferences and liberal policies have given generous space to NGOs to be active participant in democratization process and economic development of the nation states. And donors have channeled a large amount of money through them for this purpose. The result, by contrast, was somewhat disturbing as this has produced Hobbesian nature of civil society in Third World countries, including Nepal, who kept themselves busy vying for power and profit and added a layer of new elites in society. The high ranking retired bureaucrats, politicians and urban elites instantly usurped up civic sphere and became direct beneficiaries of this process and siphoned off large amount of donors money.

Today academic discourse on civil society as well as its application in shaping public policy has reached pinnacle. In fact, civil society realm itself

has been frequently used by policy makers, donors, academics and arm chair political pundits during public policy discourse. Theoretically, there are two major strands of disciplines vis-à-vis political science and sociology where discourse on civil society is taken frequently. In political science the civil society discourse is occasioned by a re-thinking on the nature of state and dynamics of democracy and in sociology the context for the discourse is provided by social movements and the role of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in socio-economic development (Jayaram 2005:16). This paper will focus on first strands of discipline (political science) because the recent debate on civil society in Nepal is more political than sociological.

Having said this, the overarching aim of this paper is to analyse how civil society has been perceived and interpreted in Nepali context. For this, I will first discuss the rationality and importance of civil society during public policy and political discourse. My analysis will focus how Nepali civil society has contributed towards democratization process and how the idea has been resonating in Nepal. I have chosen 1990s as the benchmark for this discussion for obvious reasons. At the end, the paper will answer the nature of civil society in Nepal and provide candid suggestions to promote inclusive civil society.

The Development of Civil Society as an Idea

The historical development of civil society goes back to the sixteenth-century English political thought, and the term used to be referred to the state, whereas contemporary usage tends to contrast civil society and the state. The seventeenth century theorists of civil society based their argument on the concept of a social contract. For them, civil society (*societas civilis*) was a rule of law in which citizens gave up the freedom of the state of nature in exchange for the guarantee of certain rights – security for Hobbes plus liberty and property for Locke. Later definitions of civil society included the idea of an active citizenry checking violations of social contract by the state.

Hegel's nineteenth-century notion of civil society included the market, whereas contemporary concept tends to regard civil society as a nonprofit sector. Similarly Antonio Gramsci regarded civil society as an arena where class hegemony forges consent; Karl Marx regarded civil society as a structure to serve the interests of the capitalist bourgeoisie, whereas much contemporary discussion treats civil society as a site of disruption and dissent. Alex de Tocqueville regarded civil society essential bulwark of liberal democracy. Similarly, Mary Kaldor defines civil society as the medium through which a social contract between the governing institutions and the governed is negotiated and reproduced. This includes defining moments – constitutional conventions and round tables, for example – as well as every day public pressure through the media, political parties, churches, NGOs and so on. For her, civil society is inextricably linked to individual

rights. Suffice to add therefore that the ubiquity of civil society both in critical literature and popular commentary has not led to any clear consensus about its exact meaning and role. What is true is that civil society is private in origin but public in action.

The modern concept of civil society was relaunched in Eastern Europe and Latin America in the 1980s as an attempt to capture the essence of dissident politics and to introduce democracy. The concept has subsequently travelled to all corners of globe, through intellectual exchange, activist discourse and official language of politicians and development donors. It has gradually become the terminological fad in academic, media and policy circles in the post 1990s political environment. The idea of civil society has been employed in a variety of often contradictory senses to legitimate sundry intellectual and political projects.

There is growing agreement on the importance of civil society in political discourse, economic and social development despite incongruity in meaning and interpretation. For example, in the contemporary revival of the idea of civil society, the concept has come to mean different things for different people in different places causing a great deal of ambiguities and confusion. For instance, in American context civil society argument is employed in order to underline the need to promote and strengthen a network of solidarity among citizens who are otherwise passive and individualistic (Putnam 1995). In contrast the idea of civil society in Eastern Europe is invoked to counter the state and to celebrate citizenship values and individual rights (Seligman 1992). However, in many third world and post-colonial societies the argument is directed to state and market where both are controlled by dominant elites. The idea is that it is the civil society that can control, if not entirely transform, the state and press it into the service of democracy and social justice (Mohapatra 2003: 294). Civil society realm has been used to express 'opposition' both to the state and market. That's the reason why Lewis (2002:4) has rightly noted that different local meanings (have) been created around the concept as part of an increasingly universal negotiation between citizens, states and markets, seemingly confirming Van Rooy's (1998) famous quip that the concept's inherent vagueness is part of its appeal.

The Rise of Civil Society as a Political Tool

The growing number of coalitions of civil society groups today claims the right to have a say in everything from nuclear arms control negotiations to the operations of multinational corporations. Wherever we look, activities beyond the state and market are on the march: Self-help groups care for the sick and disseminate new farming methods; campaign for human rights; action groups resist the construction of dams; journalists campaign against censorship; social movements press for minority rights; mass protests

campaign for more democracy and just society, foreign aid is disbursed via NGOs, so that a large proportion of resources are beyond the control of the state. Moreover civil society organizations are contributing towards strengthening of democratization process. They are collecting diverse forces into a common platform and exerting pressure both on state and market forces where necessary to promote inclusive political culture. In fact, as Carolyn M. Elliott notes that civil society 'has assumed mythic proportions as a tool of the social imagination, an ideological construct of a good society' (2003:3).

But, interestingly, involvement of civil society in various socio-political spectrums is fairly a new. This phenomenon has enabled civil society to emerge as an alternative global power. The bottom line, however, is why civil society as an idea has been projected as an alternative source of power in nation building when state machineries are major players in maintaining national and international order. Majority of arguments in this regard stem from 'terminology' itself which carries strong moral overtones and effectively excludes negative and destructive associations.

There are many schools of thoughts that hail civil society's role in addressing fault lines which in turn helps to resolve/transform conflicts and play significant role in citizenship building. First, modern society has three basic components 'capital, state and the people with all their associations and organisations constituting civil society' (Galtung 1996: 152). Civil society binds them and facilitates people to come together for a whole variety of public activities. Civil society in this regard works as *locus standi* for citizens who can freely organize themselves into groups and associations at various levels in order to make the formal bodies of the state authority adopt policies in consonant with their perceived interests.

Secondly, civil society is not a *non-political*; it is a *non-state* but not *anti-state* and *anti-people*. In its non-state functions, civil society covers both social and political activities. Civil society increases 'civic engagement' and stand out as the single most important proximate explanation for the difference between peace and violence. Civic engagement among various strata of society builds up 'trust' and promotes political culture (Putnam 1993) among ruling classes. Varshney in his finding in India argues that where such works of engagement and *political culture* exist (emphasis added), tensions and conflicts are regulated and managed; where they are missing, communal identities lead to endemic and ghastly violence (Varshney 2002).

Thirdly, society rather than the state, is the legitimate source of any power, civilian forces like political parties, parliamentarians, NGOs, professional bodies, peasant leagues, cooperatives, ethnic and socio-cultural associations, etc are critical components because their movements can prepare people psychologically for desired change and create choices to them

to oppose any policy or action harmful to them and explore alternative to it (Dahal 1997: 15-6).

Fourthly, state belongs to its people (that is, legitimacy of any changes lies with people's consent) and mobilisation of 'people power' (Havel 1992) against repressive regime or 'conflicting parties' helps to resolve problems. Hence, civil society movement is important because it consolidates people's power from below by strengthening grassroot institutions, values, initiatives and creativity, from above by democratising state institutions and from outside by creating a constituency for revitalising and reforming the functions of multinational institutions such as the UN in response to the global popular consciousness (Dahal 1997: 17).

Fifthly, aspirations of civil society have been drawn from the fact that civil societies characteristically are non-violent and protect individual and group freedoms from Hobbesian nation-states, Leviathan world order and irresponsible 'non-state actors' even during the conflict by creating peace constituencies. The peace constituencies work as 'islands of civility' in the war zones (Kaldor 2001: 110) and brings about changes in the every sector of humanity.

Moreover, incorporation of civil society organizations in governance process not only contributes to the sustainable peace but also addresses the urgent tasks of economic modernization, political liberalisation and social inclusion. Whatever the rationalities of civil society are, it plays a crucial role in nation building as it instills feeling of 'citizenship' among citizenry. Civil society plays an essential role in insisting on respect for existing rights, working to ensure that politicians and state officials remain accountable for their actions. This is achieved through a variety of means, including resort to the judiciary, media campaigns and protests. Equally important is that civil society can often play a crucial role in many of activities such as setting public agendas, including demanding new laws and new rights. Civil society plays a direct role in advocating change in the 'corridors' of power with the state and developing alternative policies in formulating 'inclusive' citizenship through state-civil society synergy. By and large it is the 'civic space' of civil society that promotes the notion of 'citizenship' by involving citizens into the institutional life of the state without any discrimination based on caste, creed, sex, economic status, educational attainment etc., transform sovereignty of the state to the people and elevates their status from *raitis* to public.

State of Civil Society in Nepal

While discussing civil society in Nepali context, it is worthwhile to mention that the extant notion of civil society in Nepal is fairly a new one. The contemporary revival of the idea of civil society owes much to the series of political movements and struggles for democracy in the country which dates

back to 1950s when Nepalese rebelled to topple Rana regime. This notion has acquired its current form when many civil society organizations have mushroomed in 1990 with the re-establishment of democracy. The notion gained further momentum when it took a lead role during different phases of negotiations (between Maoists and the government) at the height of Maoist insurgency and later during April uprising of 2006 and beyond.

The modern view of civil society (*Nagrik Samaj* – the Nepali equivalent of civil society) as in the rest of South Asia subscribes to the western neoliberal approach in practice. That notion seems to have travelled in tandem with neoliberal political and economic agendas. This phenomenon of civil society has had twin impacts on Nepali society. The first is that it has discounted organic concept of civiness developed in *Vedic* period which emphasis on voluntarism, mutual assistance and to some extent helps to construct the civic citizenship building. Secondly, the process of modernity in this sector, for the most part, has either superseded or commercialised or destroyed traditional forms of civil society organisations and resulted in the growth of self interested elite civil society organisations. The larger group of civil society organisations has been usurped up by the NGOs, interests groups and alike having completely different agendas, other than promoting civility, voluntarism and civic citizenship.

The repercussions of this ‘monetisation’ of civil society in Nepal were that, for example, while civic programmes and civic organizations were rapidly spreading all over the country in 1990 at the same time the commercialization of civic sphere and civic denunciation has contributed towards failure of promoting and mustering a democratic strength of dialogue with various societal actors. This has produced patron client culture with subtle corruption pervading the entire society. Civil society, in this context, failed to discharge its duty of watchdog in society partly because of its infusion with money and partly due to patron-client relationship. This was the major reasons, among others, why the country went through political crisis one after another during 1990s decade. Manifestation of this practice in 1990s raised question in academic discourse on the nature and type of Nepali civil society. The underlying point in this regard is the quest (inquiry) for a civil society which can truly promote the sense of belonging towards nation (by promoting the notion of civic citizenship which bears both rights and responsibilities of citizens and accelerate the civic sphere of civil society), that addresses social and political bias.

However, with the success of People’s Movement of 2006, it is argued that Nepali civil society has been able to whitewash its past misdeeds of 1990s. It is because People’s Movement in 2006 only succeeded when agitating seven party alliances (SPA) got overwhelming support from civil society organizations in leading the movement ahead. This has resulted renewed hope pinned on civil society. Nepalese civil society organisations

since then have been playing a vital role towards democratisation process by translating the promises of full fledged democracy (*loktantra*) made during the movement.

The uncritical glorification and lionisation of civil society merely based on the role it played (or playing) during political movements without understanding its ontology and epistemology has become problematic in theorising civil society in Nepali context. It is, therefore, not surprising that why civil society concept is so misunderstood or misinterpreted and those who use it are clearer about what they do not mean by it than what they do. The fact is that civil society in Nepal is in search of reality. This paradox will be discussed as follows.

The Theoretical Paradox and Civic Discontents

Civil society as a notion is not conceptually clear in Nepali context. That what constitutes to be a civil society (all NGOs, professional and intermediary associations, interests groups, political activists) and who belongs and who does not is most contested point in defining it. Moreover, the relationship between the state and non-state actors are plagued with ambiguities and it is not clear where does the role of state ends and non-state begins. The terminology has been frequently used in different aspects and even projected as an answer to every malaise of society without clearing off epistemic hurdles and its parameters.

The bias hinges both on its theorization and application. There is no explanation why the realm has been called civil society. And the biggest challenge lies with its application for different purposes by involving different types of groups. This poses a real theoretical challenge to define as who civil society in Nepal is and who it represents and what its parameters are: These are crucial but unanswered issues to interpret existing Nepali civil society.

With the success of People's Movement II, it has become more difficult to define civil society. This is because what has been observed is that 'joining civil society club' and forming civil society bocks just to fulfill vested petty interests has become a *norm dejure*. So is bringing out protests, closures by wearing 'civil society' tag; whether they are desirable or not by the amorphous mass. Another problem in theorising civil society is that both civil society and NGOs are interchangeably used to acknowledge each other. Part of reasons is a phenomenon that civil society is legally and analytically equated with NGO which is a 'de facto definitional amendment' of civil society but also manifestation of 'inability of academics and analysts' to differentiate between these two terms (Tamang 2003: 15-17). Practically, this was also the project developed by the donors and Nepali state. Firstly donors - given the disparities within civil society and the greater capacity of educated elites to organise, a key challenge for donors committed to poverty

reduction is identifying ways of supporting organizations of the poor, rather than organizations claiming to act on behalf of the poor and of creating spaces where the voices of the poor can be heard. This resembles with Howell's (2001) notion that donor engagement with civil society in third world countries is marked as urban bias *and have had little impact on rural civic groups* (emphasis added). Secondly from the part of state, this was the project developed by the retired bureaucrats, judges, government officials, urban based elites and chatterer's group who wanted to maintain *status quo* in society through their own ascribed linkages.

With the above discussion Nepali civil society can be classified into two categories. The first one, truly speaking, grew out of 'isation culture' such as NGOisation of service, globalization, liberalization, and privatisation and gets backing from donors. Civic sphere created by this 'isation culture' is largely populated by the self declared conglomerate of urban elites who prefers to be called 'civil society leaders'. They have made little or no attempt to address societal issues nor extended their activities in the peripheral areas let alone engaging with wider civil society. These elites of Nepalis civil society by contrast have treated citizens merely as consumer thereby ignoring basic tenets of civil society (Bhatta 2006).

The second one is promoted by political elites and political parties. This includes large numbers of interests groups, trade unions built on political lineage and work in line with political interests and protects their own interests for through civil society forums. Civil society in this context has become appellation factor. This civil society is 'oppositional' in nature. To some extent, it has helped to foster democratic rights of the people and creation of a responsible government (Bhatta: 2006).

However, when we put both types of civil society into one basket what is clear is that civic space in Nepal is restricted to politically and economically organized sectors of the society, and it is only this economically well organized section that has benefited from the modernization of this concept. And marginal groups do not find it easy to gain entry into the civil society forums. It would mean that ordinary people do not possess either access to a space or to the freedom that is necessary for democratic engagement. What needs to be emphasized is that if the benefits of civil society are restricted to these sections it just shows that the project of civil society is far from being complete. As freedom in these cases is being realized by a minority and not by the people as a whole, the basic ethics of civil society can hardly be said to exist in any meaningful way. When democracy no longer encourages the well-being of citizens along the lines of civil society it is largely because the ethics of freedom are being subverted by technological rationality or by market principles or by the majority principle or by the pure and dogmatic assertions of command or group equality (as in caste-based) politics. None of these are compatible with the ethics of civil society, nor with the cultivation

of citizenship. The civic practice itself becomes very much antithesis of civil society's norms. Civil society in this context is nothing but politics of "narcissism" as Neera Chondhoke (2003:25) said.

The exclusionary policy adopted by the state and treatment of citizen merely as 'consumers' both by state and civil society has developed 'consumerism' notion of civil society. The widening gap between political elites urban based 'columnised' civil society, duty bound rural civic organizations and ordinary citizens have deconstructed the true notion of civil society let alone construction of 'civic citizenship'. The state and society are fragmented from every aspect, citizenship values are deeply internalized by the people, social conflicts are largely undermined ... (Dahal 2006).

Civil society movement in recent years however has emerged to express disillusionment of the middle class with politics, economics, corrupt political process, Maoist insurgency, inability of the state to undertake the task of development, for inclusive democracy and just society. But the larger part of civic sphere is still populated by the urban elites and has included provision of 'hierarchy' (that is, senior civil society leaders, junior civil society leaders etc) in rank and file. They have grossly failed to accommodate those who cannot form their own associations either to bargain with the state, market or to protect their interests (downtrodden, underprivileged). Even if they have accommodated, the objectives, in most cases, seem to have been fascinated to fulfill their own interests (political or economic) by using these underprivileged groups. Hence, civil society is not inclusive and harmonious space where citizens associate with each other to influence public; rather, it is a site for contestation among different groups, as much against each other for their rightful place and for the benefits of development, as against the state. As a result civil society has not been able to promote the notion of civic citizenship which is the building block for nation building and democratization process.

The NGOs and civil society boom, and the disunity among them, reflect country's social asymmetry in caste, class, ethnicity, gender and regions. The biggest problem is 'how do citizens qualify to be a member of the civil society and *vice versa*' where civil society is based on class interest and citizenship produced so is 'exclusive' as against the need of addressing fault-lines of critical mass in order to reconstruct the civil society based on civic citizenship which will put this nation on the right track.

Civil Society as a New Avatar

Civil society has taken the front seat in reengineering society politically, economically and socially. Civil society's work has been simplified after it received renewed legitimacy from international organizations like the UN and other multilateral organizations in deciding public policies. Civil society is endowed to take greater deal of responsibility and civic movements have

become natural phenomenon both at national and international political arena either to overthrow or restore political systems for the cause of broader representation. The movements indeed have reached new heights following the dramatic events of 1989 in the Eastern and central Europe when communist regimes fell one after another like a house of card. The unforeseen and dramatic events surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall have been interpreted in numerous ways. Most significantly it has been the proclamation of 1989 as indicative of the victory of civil society and civic movement against despotic regimes. This presumed triumph of 'good people' over 'bad system' restored faith in humanity, encouraging considerable optimism of an international scale. Such enthusiasm, based upon anticipation of a new type of politics grounded on the principles of democracy, citizenship, and morality, was compounded by the accession to political power of prominent dissidents. This new politics would, it was assumed, be characterized by the associations of civil society which were expected to emerge in response to the end of the repressive regimes. The civil society led movements was a major catalyst behind 'third wave of democratization' which led to the worldwide fall of the despotic regimes.

Likewise in Nepali context, the civil society upsurge against the royal regime is a classic example. This is a significant achievement of civil society in modern times, after velvet revolutions of 1989, has set a precedent that political revolutions can bring about changes without spilling blood. The underlying feature of this movement was that the movement was remarkably peaceful, self regulated; atomised right based civil society (a self enlightened liquid mass, not the urban based elite civil society) took a front seat for the first time as a bid to end the autocratic regime for ever.

The frequency in rallies aftermath of *Jana Andolan* of 2006 taken out by civil society organizations and their leaders in the name of *khbardari julus* shows an increased level of political awareness and unflinching faith on democracy for sustainable peace. Civil society's euphoria has provoked everyone to be known as civil society activists. Terminology has become so handy that if one doesn't belong to political parties, s/he can easily join civil society club; take to the streets and start chanting slogans to suit her/his interests. This is seen as an easiest way to have things done and also to wash up past misdeeds, if any.

But civic euphoria expressed by unabated protests also poses serious challenges as to what type of civil society will ultimately produce in the long run because this is simply an 'unorganized liquid mass' often violent in nature. Thus, it raises more questions than the answers it offers. The biggest worry is what happens if this transforms into an established trend of bringing down political (whether they are desirable or not) systems through. Moreover, too much of 'civic protests' might lead any nation into a 'banana state' where the one who shouts loudest is the one who wins and country

might ultimately fall into the hands of anarchists. Furthermore, too much of civic protest might reduce the role of political parties which can be dangerous for the sustainability of democracy. A political order is necessary for a good society. Moreover solutions cannot always be sought through violent protests. And opposition to the bad system does not always necessarily create a good system. The good system only establishes if the civil society is civilized. For the time being, perhaps this might be the result of public frustration of age old authoritarian rule and deceiving behaviour of political leaders. Therefore one cannot outright comment on this postmodern version of Nepali civil society at this stage. What is, however, needed is to change the *modus operandi* of civic protests. This theoretical and practical fuzziness have a clear breach both in the literature and discourse and logically puts a question mark on the nature of civil society and expectations underpinned on it.

Conclusion

What can be concluded from this discussion is that existing civil society in Nepal, including the surfeit of NGOs, pro-democracy groups and civil society groups, civil society activists are highly laden with their own 'perception of interests'. They are, by contrast, divided on partisan line with one foot in civil society and the other out of it. This is the major reason why civil society in Nepal has not been able to promote civic citizenship. Civil society in Nepal is not the story of 'ordinary people living extraordinary lives'. It is the story of those who are vying for power and would like to maintain *status quo* by climbing 'civil society' ladder. Hence, theoretically part of our civil society can be compared with Hobbesian notion (the urban based power-monger which exists in the state of nature); and the liquid unorganised unruly mass that occasionally challenges both state and market can be compared with Gramscian notion of antihegemonic civil society and the rest with Chatterjeeian notion of 'oppositional' model that opposes everything that comes on the way through protests; closures whatever comes on the way (positive or negative) without really going deep on its repercussions. I have also analysed post 1990s civil society which is in tandem with political society contaminated 'state of affairs' during 1990s. But it certainly has emerged as an 'alternative force' in recent time during People's Movement II thereby elevating its position. To put it in Scott's words, it has become 'weapons of the weak' on resistance to authority (Goody 2001:157). That said civil society in Nepal is in the 'empowerment' process, exposing various issues confronting the nation despite its contradictions. The two models of civil society (the Gramscian and Chatterjeeian) are the one that put question mark on the nature of civil society but this is obvious in politically instable state like Nepal which has been moving from one crisis to another for more than half a century.

The challenge for Nepalese civil society is to democratise horizontally and civilise 'oppositional movements' by making them inclusive, representative for a wider social causes rather than fulfilling the interest of political parties; special groups *per se* or championing objectives of self declared civil society leaders. Hence, I have made the proposition of 'inclusive secular civil society' to avoid both theoretical and practical bias existing in this field. This can perhaps be achieved by introducing civic education in schools; public opinion; discourse and pressure by right based NGOs. This will elucidate new breed of civil society free from clan; tribal loyalty; aiming to engage in the analysis of major rules and regulations of society, liberate people from primordial thinking and prepare them to rise above personal and familial interests. Only then we can have a true civil society which will assist to translate civic virtues into practical life including conflict transformation/ resolution.

Note

1. In 1990s the major UN conference/convention/summits took place such as the Vienna convention on human rights, Rio Summit on environment, Beijing conference on Women, Copenhagen Social Summit are to name a few in this regard.

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CLASSIFICATION OF CHHATTHARE LIMBU

Govinda Bahadur Tumbahang

Introduction

The language spoken by the Limbus of the Chhatthar area is called *Chhatthare pan* or *Chhatthare Yakthungba pan* 'Chhatthare language' in the native language. This area lies to the east of the Arun along the Leguwa river, which flows through between Chanuwa and Dandagaun VDCs, and Marek Katahare VDC. Chanuwa and Dandagaun VDCs traditionally belong to the *Das Majhiyas* 'ten Majhiyas' under Chainpur district which is at present in Sangkhuwasabha district. Marek Katahare, on the other hand, belongs to the Chhatthar area and borders *Das Majhiya* at Pattek on the north. It borders Phedap on the east at Nuwakhola and Panchthar and Chaubish at the Tamar river on the south. The northern boundary extends from the Tamar river along the Tangkhuwa river, which is the border of Chhatthar area on the southwest. The river flows from the hill ridge, Sidhuwa, from where its area widens and again extends westward along the ridges. Thus, it includes Leguwa, Jitpur, Marekkatahare, Sanne, Hattikharka, Murtidhungnga, Tangkhuwa, Teliya, Parewadin VDCs in the Dhankuta district and Panchakanya Pokhari, Phakchamara, Hamarjung, Angdim, Phulek, Basantapur, Dangappa, Sudap and Okhre in the Terhathum district. The population of the Chhatthare Limbu 18, 277 (CBS 2002).

Problem

Wiedert and Subba (1985), van Driem (1987), Michailovsky (2003), Webster (2001), Kainla (2002) and Grimes (2005) classify Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu on the basis of socio-linguistic considerations because the Limbus in general consider it as a dialect and the Chhatthare Limbus themselves call it a Limbu language. But on the basis of linguistic analysis, Hanson (1991), Ebert (1994) and Bradley (1997) classify it as a separate language. So, whether Chhatthare is a dialect or a separate language is the problem of this study.

Phenomenon

In Nepal four major variants of Limbu – Tamarkhole, Panthare, Phedappe and Chhatthare – are spoken in their respective areas. Among them, Chhatthare Limbu is very different from the other three variants in that it is unintelligible to those speakers who are not related to it by marriage, social contact or cultural touch. Similarly, the other non-Chhatthare variants are also unintelligible to those children who have been brought up purely in the Chhatthare Limbu socio-linguistic milieu. Minor differences in lexical and

grammatical forms exist even within the non-Chhatthare variants but they are not as wide as those which are seen between Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare variants. Likewise, the differences among the Chhatthare variants are also minor ones. The non-Chhatthare variants spoken in Nepal are close to those variants spoken in West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and Meghalaya of Indian states and in Myanmar and Bhutan among the third countries and they are mutually intelligible to their speakers. The standard Limbu dialect of Nepal which is very similar to Panthare dialect is intelligible to them. So, in Nepal there is nothing wrong in calling Tamarkhole, Phedappe and Panthare as the dialects of Limbu but it creates a problem in calling Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu from the viewpoint of acquiring primary education in the mother tongue. The difference between Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare Limbu is ignored because their speakers can make matrimonial alliance and share the same culture, custom, religion, literature and script and in addition, recognize each other as *Yakthungba* and their language as *Yakthungba pan*. Chhatthare adults can understand the non-Chhatthare variants because they are used as a lingua franca for communication between Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare Limbus. Besides, on the occasions of religious rituals, cultural programs, marriage ceremony and death rituals, non-Chhatthare Limbu is used. Therefore, this intelligibility can not be called 'inherent intelligibility' but a 'learned one' developed out of social and cultural contacts. Chhatthare people feel that their language variant is different from other variants but do not want to speak this truth because he is emotionally and culturally one with other Limbus and, therefore, do not want to weaken the unity among the Limbus by raising the language difference issue. Other Limbu speakers, on the other hand, have not realized the need to see the difference as they have not ever felt the need to speak Chhatthare Limbu. If the speakers of the Chhatthare language are happy with the status of their language as 'dialect', the speakers of other Limbu dialects will hardly feel the need of classifying it as a different language.

After the establishment of East India Company, British government raised Gurkha regiments and recruited Limbu youths in army. The British diplomat like B. H. Hodgeson and army official like Major Senior took notes of Limbu words from them and listed in their books. Major Senior even compiled a dictionary of Limbu. Dr Konow wrote a grammar of Limbu on the basis of the parable of Limbu and other materials obtained from Major Senior who had collected data from Limbus belonging to different clans or places and assigned the status of dialect either according to the clan name or area name and then classified Limbu into Phedopia dialect, Fagu Rai dialect and Tamarkhola dialect (see Grierson 1909:297-304) without any linguistic analysis. In fact, the dialects of Limbu were designated on geographical basis such as Mewakhole, Maiyakhole, Tamarkhole, Yangrokke, Phedappe, Panthare, Chaubise and Chhatthare. The first linguistic survey was carried

out in the three zones -Mechi, Koshi and Sagarmatha of eastern Nepal between the years 1981-1984 by the Linguistic Survey of Nepal funded by the German Research Council with the support of CNAS, Tribhuvan University under the directorship of Prof. Winter. Wiedert was the field supervisor and Bikram Subba was his assistant. Though they might have visited Chhatthar area during the survey, they did not pay attention to the distinctive features of the Chhatthare Limbu. Without the study of field work report, they wrote *Concise Limbu Grammar and Dictionary* based on Panthare dialect and got it published in 1985. However, this is the first work which classifies Limbu into four dialects - Mewakhola and Taplejung dialect, Panthare dialect, Phedappe dialect and Chhatthare dialect on the basis of more or less linguistic considerations. The classification of Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu seems to be predominantly based on socio-linguistic consideration rather than on pure linguistic considerations. Van Driem (1987:XXII-XXIII) also classifies it as a dialect of Limbu following Wiedert and Subba (1985:6) without field work verification. *The Rais of the eastern Himalayas* (1991) by Hanson classifies it as a separate language on the basis of the field work carried out by the Linguistic Survey of Nepal. Then, other linguists such as Ebert (1994) and Bradley (1997) support it. Grimes (1996: 725) classifies it as a separate language under the Kiranti group of the eastern Himalayan family. It doesn't confirm it as a dialect and leaves it out with the remark 'survey needed'. But in the entry of Limbu, the same ethnologue describes Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu. Webster (2001:52-53) classifies it as a dialect of Limbu on the basis of mutual intelligibility. Kainla (2003:11) follows Wiedert and Subba, Van Driem and Webster in his classification of Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu and again Grimes (2005) follows them classifying Chhatthare as a dialect of Limbu. The interesting thing about those who assign Chhatthare the status of dialect of Limbu is that they simply assign the status but they do not include any Chhatthare word as a dialectal variant in their dictionaries.

As a native speaker of Chhatthare Limbu, I feel that it is very different from other dialects such as Phedappe, Panthare and Taplejungge and that Hanson (1991:110) is right in his classification of Chhatthare as a separate language on the basis of linguistic consideration. However, Chhatthare people are so strongly tied to this community culturally and emotionally that they do not want to call it a separate language because they fear that it might disrupt their unity, which they can not even imagine. The fact that Chhatthare is very different from Phedappe is accepted by Van Driem (1987:XXII). He says, "Limbu of Chhatthare speakers is virtually wholly unintelligible to Phedappe speakers of the village Tamphula..." Similarly, Kainla (2009 B.S.:11) says that Chhatthare is quite distinct from other dialects. In spite of such realization, they still classify it as a dialect because Chhatthare Limbus call their language as Limbu language and they do not want to go against

their spirit. Webster (2001) says that he recorded a three minute story in Chhatthare Limbu, played it to the Chhatthare speakers for home test. After the test, he played it to other non-Chhatthare speakers. When he asked them questions related to the text, he found almost all answers correct. Then, he classified it as dialect. In the report (Webster 2001:58-59), he writes, 'Though with clear Chhatthare distinctiveness in its grammar and lexicon, this text was well understood in the Panthare test site. It does not seem warranted to classify Chhatthare, then, as a separate speech variety from Limbu.' However, in the same article (page65), he has not missed to report that ' For those who have mentioned Chhatthare, 14/17 said they did not understand it or understood little of it. This is very confusing. As a matter of fact, intelligibility as a criterion for the classification of dialect leads to an unexpected result in the classification of Limbu dialects. The Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare Limbu speakers can make relation by marriage. In a single family, mother-in-law might be Tamarkhole Limbu speaker, her eldest daughter-in-law might be Phedappe speaker, her elder daughter-in-law might be a Chhatthare speaker and the rest of the family members might be Panthare speakers. In such a family, due to social contact, non-Chhatthare Limbu speakers might understand Chhatthare Limbu. Chhatthare Limbu and Athpare Rai are two different languages in the vicinity. However, the speakers of each language can understand the language of other speakers. If three minute story recorded in one language is played to the speakers of other language and ask them questions related to the text, they will answer 100% correct. Can Webster call them the dialects of the same language on the basis of intelligibility? Of course, not. The intelligibility here is because of socio-linguistic milieu like the case in Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare mixed family. His informants' backgrounds need cross-checking and his reports re-analyzing.

Comparative Phonology

Consonant Phonemes: All variants of Limbu phonemes can be classified into stop, fricative, affricate, nasal, liquid and semi-vowel on the basis of manner of articulation and into labial, dental, alveolar, velar and glottal phonemes on the basis of place of articulation. Aspiration is a contrastive feature in all of them.

Table 1: Consonant phonemes of Chhatthare Limbu

	labial	dental	alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
Stop	p b pH	t tH			k g kH	ʔ
Fricative			s			h
Affricate			c cH			
Nasal	m	n			ŋ	
Liquid			r	l		
Semi-vowel	w			y		

Phedappe Limbu has 18 consonant phonemes and it does not have the phonemes /g/ and /cH/ that the Chhatthare have. Panthare and Taplejungnge have only 17 consonants. They do not have the consonants /b/, /g/ and /cH/ of the Chhatthare Limbu.

Chhatthare Limbu Vowel Phonemes: Chhatthare Limbu has 7 vowels. They are divided into close, half-close, half open and open vowels. The front vowels are unrounded and the back vowels are rounded. They have no vowel length contrast.

Table 2: Vowel phonemes of Chhatthare Limbu

Close	i	u
Half-close	e	o
Half-open	E	
Open	a	

In other dialects, all vowels except /e/ and /o/ have length contrast. So, there are twelve vowels in Panthare and Taplejungnge Limbu. Phedappe Limbu has one more vowel /↔/ in addition to them.

Comparison of Words: Chhatthare Limbu differs from other dialects in demonstrative pronouns. It also differs from other dialects in many of the words provided in one- hundred word list of Swadesh. Demonstrative pronouns included in Swadesh list has been excluded as they have been compared in a separate table.

Table 3: Demonstrative pronouns of Limbu variant

No.	Demonstratives	Chhatthare	Panthare	Phedappe	Taplejungnge
1.	this	kumba	k n	k ŋ	en
2.	these (two)	kumbaghachi	k nhasi	k ŋha?	en-ha
3.	these (many)	kumbagha	k nha	k nha?	en-ha
4.	that	hamba	hen	khen	
5.	those (two)	hambaghachi	henhasi	khenha	
6.	those (many)	hambagha	henha	khenha	

Table 4: Limbu variants of Swadesh words

No	Words	Chhatthare	Panthare	Phedappe	Taplejungnge
1.	I	a	anga	anga	anga
2.	who	sa	ha?	en	hat
3.	what	hE	the	hen	the
4.	not	Ekhan	men	men	men
5.	all	kErEk	kak	kerek	kerek
6.	man	napmi	yapmi/m na	m na	yapmi
7.	hair	thaik	thegek	thegek	thegek
8.	head	thaik	thegek	thegek	thegek
9.	nose	nabo	nebo?	nebo	nebo
10.	tongue	lEkpha	lesot	lesot	lesot
11.	foot	laŋ	laŋbho	laŋbho	laŋbho
12.	neck	p kla	niŋma	niŋma	niŋma
13.	drink	thuŋ-u?	thuŋ-e?	thuŋ-e?	thuŋ-e?
14.	eat	c ?	ce?	ce?	ce?
15.	bite	har-u?	ha?r-e?	ha?r-e?	ha?r-e
16.	see	mEtt-u?	omett-e?	Amett-e	omett-e
17.	hear	khEps-u?	kheps-e?	kheps-e?	kheps-e?
18.	know	lEh-u?	less-e?	less-e?	less-e?
19.	sleep	ips-a?	ips-e?	ips-e?	ips-e?
20.	die	siy-a?	se?	se?	se?
21.	kill	sEr-u?	ser-e?	ser-e?	ser-e?
22.	swim	wajakk-a?	wa-jakt-e?	wa-jakt-e?	wa-jakt-e?
23.	fly	pey-a?	per-e?	per-e?	per-e?
24.	walk	laŋghEg-a?	laŋghEg-e?	laŋghEg-e?	laŋghEg-e?
25.	come	phEr-a?	pher-e?	pher-e?	pher-e?
26.	lie	nEh-a	ness-e?	ness-e?	ness-e?
27.	sit	yuŋ-a?	yuŋ-e?	yuŋ-e?	yuŋ-e?
28.	stand	Eb-a?	yeb-e?	yeb-e?	yeb-e?
29.	give	piy-u?	pir-e?	pir-e?	pir-e?
30.	say	pat-u?	pat-e?	pat-e?	pat-e?
31.	star	khEsemikpa	khese?	khese?	khese?

32.	rain	wahit	wahit	w hit	hit
33.	burn	thind-u?	thind-e?	thind-e?	thind-e?
34.	green	kubhiqla	s rekkyappa	s rekkyappa	s rekkyappa
35.	night	yunchik	sendik	sendik	sendik
36.	cold	kajiba	kesemba	kesemba	kesemba
37.	full	ku-dim	ku-lem	ku-lem	ku-lem
38.	hot	kagoba	kegoba	kegoba	kegoba
39.	dry	kahEba	keheba	keheba	keheba

Comparison of Verb Paradigms: Chhatthare Limbu has a word *l mma* for 'to beat' whereas other three dialects have a word *hipma* for it. The following tables show the comparative verb paradigms of Limbu variants for 'to beat' in past and non past forms.

Table 5: Comparative verb paradigms of Limbu variants for 'to beat' in non-past form

N.	Person	Chhatthare	Panthare	Phedappe	Taplejungge
1.	1s-2s	l m-na	hip-nE?	hip-nE	hip-nE
2.	1s-2d	l m-na-chi-ŋ	hip-nE-chi-ŋ?	hip-nE-chi-ŋ	hip-nE-si-ŋ
3.	1s-2p	l m-na-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ
4.	1nse-2	l m-nE-chi-ŋa	hip-ne-tchi-gya	hip-ne-chi-gE	hip-ne-si-gE
5.	1s-3s	l ps-u-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ?	hipt-u-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ
6.	1s-3ns	l ps-u-ŋ-si-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ?	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ
7.	1di-3s	a-l m-ch-u	a-hip-s-u?	a-hip-s-u	a-hip-s-u
8.	1di-3ns	a-l m-ch-u-si	a-hip-s-u-si?	a-hip-s-u-si	a-hip-s-u-si
9.	1de-3s	l m-ch-u-ŋ-a	hipsugya?	hip-s-u-gE	hip-s-u-gE
10.	1de-3ns	l m-ch-u-si-ŋ-a	hip-s-u-si-gya	hip-s-u-si-gE	hip-s-u-si-gE
11.	1pi-3s	a-l ps-u-m	a-hipt-u-m?	a-hipt-u-m	a-hipt-u-m
12.	1pi-3ns	a-l ps-u-m-si-m	a-hipt-u-m-si-m?	a-hipt-u-m-si-m	a-hipt-u-m-si-m
13.	1pe-3s	l ps-u-m-ma	hipt-u-m-ba?	hipt-u-m-be	hipt-u-m-be
14.	1pe-3ns	l ms-u-m-si-m-ma	hipt-u-m-si-m-ba?	hipt-u-m-si-m-be	hipt-u-m-si-m-be
15.	2s-1s	ka-l m-ma	kE-hip-a?	kE-hip-?E	kE-hip-ma
16.	2-1	ka-l m	yapmi kE-hip	a-gE-hip	a-gE-hip
17.	2s-3s	ka-l ps-u	kE-hipt-u?	kE-hipt-u	kE-hipt-u
18.	2s-3ns	ka-l ps-u-si	kE-hipt-u-si?	kE-hipt-u-si	kE-hipt-u-si
19.	2d-3s	ka-l m-ch-u	kE-hip-s-u?	kE-hip-s-u	kE-hip-s-u
20.	2d-3ns	ka-l m-ch-u-si	kE-hip-s-u-si?	kE-hip-s-u-si	kE-hip-s-u-si
21.	2p-3s	ka-l ps-u-m	kE-hipt-u-m?	kE-hipt-u-m	kE-hipt-u-m
22.	2p-3ns	ka-l ps-u-m-si-m	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m?	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m

23	3s-1s	a-l m-ma	hip-a?	hip-?E	hip-ma
24	3s-1di	a-l m-chi	a-hip-si?	a-hip-si	a-hip-si
25	3s-1de	a-l m-chi-ŋ-a	yapmi hip?	hip-si-gE	hip-si-gE
26	3S-1pi	a-l ps-i/a-l m	a-hip?	a-hip	a-hip
27	3s-1pe	a-l ps-i-ŋ-a	yapmi hip?	hipti-gE	hipt-i-gE
28	3ns-1s	a-n-l m-ma	yapmi hip-si?	mE-hu-?E	mE-hip-ma
29	3ns-1di	a-n-l m-chi	a-m-hip-si?	a-m-hip-si	a-m-hips-i
30	3ns-1de	a-n-l m-chi-ŋ-a	yapmi hip?	me-hip-si-gE	me-hip-si-gE
31	3ns-1pi	a-n-l ps-i	a-m-hip?	a-m-hip	a-m-hip
32	3ns-1pe	a-n-l ps-i-ŋ-a	yapmi hip?	mE-hipt-i-gE	mE-hipt-i-
33	3s-2s	ka-l m	kE-hip?	kE-hip	kE-hip
34	3s-2d	ka-l m-chi	kE-hip-si	kE-hip-si	kE-hip-si
35	3s-2p	ka-l ps-i	kE-hipp-i	kE-hipt-i	kE-hipt-i
36	3ns-2s	ka-n-l m	kE-m-hip?	kE-m-hip	kE-m-hip
37	3ns-2d	ka-n-l m-chi	kE-m-hip-si?	kE-m-hip-si	kE-m-hip-si
38	3ns-2p	ka-n-l ps-i	kE-m-hipp-i	kE-m-hipt-i	kE-m-hipt-i
39	3s-3s	l ps-u	hipt-u?	hipt-u	hipt-u
40	3s-3ns	l ps-u-si	hipt-u-si?	hipt-u-si	hipt-u-si
41	3d-3s	l m-ch-u	hip-s-u?	hip-s-u	hips-u
42	3d-3ns	l m-ch-u-si	hip-s-u-si?	hip-s-u-si	hips-u-si
43	3p-3s	mu-l ps-u	me-hipt-u	me-hipt-u	me-hipt-u
44	3p-3ns	mu-l ps-u-si	me-hipt-u-si	me-hipt-u-si	me-hipt-u-si

Table 6: Comparative verb paradigms of Limbu variants for ‘to beat’ in past form

N.	Person	Chhatthare	Panthare	Phedappe	Taplejungge
1.	1s-2s	l m-na	hip-nE	hip-nE	hip-nE
2.	1s-2d	l m-na-chi-ŋ	hip-nE-chi-ŋ	hip-nE-chi-ŋ	hip-nE-si-ŋ
3.	1s-2p	l m-na-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ	hip-ni-ŋ
4.	1nse-2	l m-ne-chi-ŋa	hip-ne-tchi-gya	hip-ne-chi-gE	hip-ne-si-gE
5.	1s-3s	l ps-u-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ
6.	1s-3ns	l ps-u-ŋ-si-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ	hipt-u-ŋ-si-ŋ
7.	1di-3s	a-l m-ch-u	a-hip-s-u	a-hip-s-u	a-hip-s-u
8.	1di-3ns	a-l ps-a-ch-u-si	a-hipt-e-cch-u-si?	a-hipt-e-tch-u-si	a-hipt-e-s-u-si
9.	1de-3s	l ps-a-ch-u-ŋ-a	hipt-e-cchugya?	hipt-e-tch-u-gE	hipt-e-s-u-gE
10.	1de-3ns	l ps-a-ch-u-si-ŋ-a	hipt-e-cch-u-si-gya	hip-s-u-si-gE	hip-s-u-si-gE
11.	1pi-3s	a-l ps-u-m	a-hipt-u-m	a-hipt-u-m	a-hipt-u-m
12.	1pi-3ns	a-l ps-u-m	a-hipt-u-m-si-	a-hipt-u-m-si-	a-hipt-u-m-si-

		si-m	m	m	m
13	1pe-3s	l ps-u-m-ma	hipt-u-m-ba	hipt-u-m-be	hipt-u-m-be
14	1pe-3ns	l ps-u-m-si-m-ma	hipt-u-m-si-m-ba	hipt-u-m-si-m-be	hipt-u-m-si-m-be
15	2s-1s	ka-l ps-a-ŋ	kE-hipt-a-ŋ	kE-hipt-a-ŋ	kE-hipt-a-ŋ
16.	2-l	ka-l ps-a-ŋ	yapmi kE-hipt-a	a-gE-hipt-E	a-gE-hipt-E
17	2s-3s	ka-l ps-u	kE-hipt-u	kE-hipt-u	kE-hipt-u
18	2s-3ns	ka-l ps-u-si	kE-hipt-u-si	kE-hipt-u-si	kE-hipt-u-si
19	2d-3s	ka-l ps-a-ch-u	kE-hipt-e-cchu- u	kE-hipt-e-tch-u	kE-hipt-e-s-u
20	2d-3ns	ka-l ps-a-ch-u-si	kE-hipt-e-cchu-u-si	kE-hipt-e-tch-u-si	kE-hipt-e-ch-u-si
21	2p-3s	ka-l ps-u-m	kE-hipt-u-m	kE-hipt-u-m	kE-hipt-u-m
22	2p-3ns	ka-l ps-u-m-si-m	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m	kE-hipt-u-m-si-m
23	3s-1s	a-l ps-a-ŋ	hipt-a-ŋ	hipt-a-ŋ	hipt-a-ŋ
24	3s-1di	a-l ps-a-chi	a-hipt-e-cchi	a-hipt-e-tchi	a-hipt-e-si
25	3s-1de	a-l ps-a-chi-ŋ-a	yapmi hipt-a	hipt-e-tchi-gE	hipt-e-si-gE
26	3S-1pi	a-l ps-i/a-l ps-a	a-hipt-a	a-hipt-E	a-hipt-E
27	3s-1pe	a-l ps-i-ŋ-a	yapmi hipt-a	hipti-gE	hipt-i-gE
28	3ns-1s	a-n-l ps-a-ŋ	yapmi hipt-a	mE-hipt-a-ŋ	mE-hipt-a-ŋ
29	3ns-1di	a-n-l ps-a-chi	a-m-hipt-e-cchi	a-m-hipt-e-tchi	a-m-hipt-e-si
30	3ns-1de	a-n-l ps-a-chi-ŋ-a	yapmi hipt-a	me-hipt-e-tchi-gE	me-hipt-e-si-gE
31	3ns-1pi	a-n-l ps-i	a-m-hipt-a	a-m-hipt-E	a-m-hipt-E
32	3ns-1pe	a-n-l ps-i-ŋ-a	yapmi hipt-a	mE-hipt-i-gE	mE-hipt-i-gE
33	3s-2s	ka-l ps-a	kE-hipt-a	kE-hipt-E	kE-hipt-E
34	3s-2d	ka-l ps-a-chi	kE-hipt-cchi	kE-hipt-e-tchi	kE-hipt-e-si
35	3s-2p	ka-l ps-i	kE-hipp-i	kE-hipt-i	kE-hipt-i
36	3ns-2s	ka-n-l ps-a	kE-m-hipp-a	kE-m-hipt-E	kE-m-hipt-E
37	3ns-2d	ka-n-l ps-a-chi	kE-m-hipt-e-cchi	kE-m-hipt-e-tchi	kE-m-hipt-E-si
38	3ns-2p	ka-n-l ps-i	kE-m-hipp-i	kE-m-hipt-i	kE-m-hipt-i
39	3s-3s	l ps-u	hipt-u	hipt-u	hipt-u
40	3s-3ns	l ps-u-si	hipt-u-si	hipt-u-si	hipt-u-si
41	3d-3s	l ps-a-ch-u	hipt-e-cch-u	hipt-e-tch-u	hipt-e-s-u
42	3d-3ns	l ps-a-ch-u-si	hipt-e-cch-u-si?	hipt-e-tch-u-si	hipt-e-s-u-si
43	3p-3s	mu-l ps-u	me-hipt-u	me-hipt-u	me-hipt-u
44	3p-3ns	mu-l ps-u-si	me-hipt-u-si	me-hipt-u-si	me-hipt-u-si

Table 7: Comparative negative verb paradigms of Limbu variants for ‘to not beat’ in non-past form

N.	Person	Chhatthare	Panthare	Phedappe	Taplejungge
1.	1s-2s	ma-l m-na-n	me-hip-nE-n	me-hip-nE-n	me-hip-nE-n
2.	1s-2d	ma-l m-na-chi-η-nen	me-hip-nE-chi-η-ηin	me-hip-nE-chi-η-nen	me-hip-nE-si-η-nen
3.	1s-2p	ma-l m-na-ni-η-nen	me-hip-ni-η-ηin	me-hip-ni-η-nen	me-hip-ni-η-nen
4.	1nse-2	ma-l m-ne-chi-ηa-n	me-hip-ne-tchi-gya-in	me-hip-ne-chi-gE-n	me-hip-ne-si-gE-n
5.	1s-3s	ma-l m-m-a-n	me-hip-ma-n	me-hip-?E-n	me-hip-ma-n
6.	1s-3ns	ma-l m-ma-n-chin	me-hip-ma-n-chin	me-hipt-u-η-si-η-nen	me-hipt-u-η-si-η-nen
7.	1di-3s	a-n-l m-ch-u-η-n	a-n-hip-s-u-n	a-n-hip-s-u-n	a-n-hip-s-u-n
8.	1di-3ns	a-n-l m-ch-u-si-n	a-n-hip-s-u-si-n	a-n-hip-s-u-si-n	a-n-hip-s-u-si-n
9.	1de-3s	ma-l m-ch-u-η-a-n	me-hipsugya-in?	me-hip-s-u-gE-n	me-hip-s-u-gE-n
10.	1de-3ns	ma-l m-ch-u-si-η-a-n	me-hip-s-u-si-gya-in	me-hip-s-u-si-gE-n	me-hip-s-u-si-gE-n
11.	1pi-3s	a-n-l ps-u-m-nen	a-n-hipt-u-m-min?	a-n-hipt-u-m-nen	a-n-hipt-u-m-nen
12.	1pi-3ns	a-n-l ps-u-m-si-m-nen	a-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-min?	a-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-nen	a-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-nen
13.	1pe-3s	ma-l ps-u-m-ma-n	me-hipt-u-m-ba-in?	me-hipt-u-m-be-n	me-hipt-u-m-be-n
14.	1pe-3ns	ma-l ps-u-m-si-m-ma-n	me-hipt-u-m-si-m-ba-in?	me-hipt-u-m-si-m-be-n	me-hipt-u-m-si-m-be-n
15.	2s-1s	ka-n-l m-ma-n	kE-n-hip-a-in?	kE-n-hip-?E-n	kE-n-hip-ma-n
16.	2-1	ka-n-l m-ma-n	yapmi kE-n-hip-pin	a-gE-n-hip-nen	a-gE-n-hip-nen
17.	2s-3s	ka-n-l ps-u-n	kE-n-hipt-u-n?	kE-n-hipt-u-n	kE-n-hipt-u-n
18.	2s-3ns	ka-n-l ps-u-si-n	kE-n-hipt-u-si-n?	kE-n-hipt-u-si-n	kE-n-hipt-u-si-n
19.	2d-3s	ka-n-l m-ch-u-n	kE-n-hip-s-u-n?	kE-n-hip-s-u-n	kE-n-hip-s-u-n
20.	2d-3ns	ka-n-l m-ch-u-si-n	kE-n-hip-s-u-si-n?	kE-n-hip-s-u-si-n	kE-n-hip-s-u-si-n
21.	2p-3s	ka-n-l ps-u-	kE-n-hipt-u-	kE-n-hipt-u-m-	kE-hipt-u-m-nen

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		m-nen	m-min?	nen	
22	2p-3ns	ka-n-l ps-u-m-si-m-nen	kE-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-min?	kE-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-nen	kE-n-hipt-u-m-si-m-nen
23	3s-1s	a-n-l m-ma-n	me-hip-a-n?	me-hip-?E-n	me-hip-ma-n
24	3s-1di	a-n-l m-chi-n	a-n-hip-si-n?	a-n-hip-si-n	a-n-hip-si-n
25	3s-1de	a-n-l m-chi-ŋ-a-n	yapmi me-hip-pin	me-hip-si-gE-n	me-hip-si-gE-n
26	3S-1pi	a-n-n-l ps-i-n/a-n-l m-nen	a-m-men-hip-pin	a-m-men-hip-nen	a-m-men-hip-nen
27	3s-1pe	a-n-n-l ps-i-ŋ-a-n	yapmi me-hip-pin	me-hipti-gE-n	me-hipt-i-gE-n
28	3ns-1s	a-n-n-l m-ma-n	yapmi me-hip-si-n?	mE-n-hip-?E-n	mE-n-hip-ma-n
29	3ns-1di	a-n-n-l m-chi-n	a-m-men-hip-si-n?	a-m-men-hip-si-n	a-m-men-hips-i-n
30	3ns-1de	a-n-n-l m-chi-ŋ-a-n	yapmi me-hip-pin?	me-n-hip-si-gE-n	me-n-hip-si-gE-n
31	3ns-1pi	a-n-n-l ps-i-n	a-m-men-hip-pin?	a-m-men-hip-nen	a-m-men-hip-nen
32	3ns-1pe	a-n-n-l ps-i-ŋ-a-n	yapmi men-hip-pin?	mE-n-hipt-i-gE-n	mE-n-hipt-i-gE-n
33	3s-2s	ka-n-l m-nen	kE-n-hip-pin?	kE-n-hip-nen	kE-n-hip-nen
34	3s-2d	ka-n-l m-chi-n	kE-n-hip-si-n	kE-n-hip-si-n	kE-n-hip-si-n
35	3s-2p	ka-n-l ps-i-n	kE-n-hipp-i-n	kE-n-hipt-i-n	kE-n-hipt-i-n
36	3ns-2s	ka-n-n-l m-nen	kE-m-men-hip-pin	kE-m-men-hip-nen	kE-m-men-hip-nen
37	3ns-2d	ka-n-n-l m-chi-n	kE-m-men-hip-si-n?	kE-m-men-hip-si-n	kE-m-men-hip-si-n
38	3ns-2p	ka-n-n-l ps-i-n	kE-m-men-hipp-i-n	kE-m-men-hipt-i-n	kE-m-men-hipt-i-n
39	3s-3s	ma-l ps-u-n	me-hipt-u-n?	me-hipt-u-n	me-hipt-u-n
40	3s-3ns	ma-l ps-u-si-n	me-hipt-u-si-n?	me-hipt-u-si-n	me-hipt-u-si-n
41	3d-3s	ma-l m-ch-u-n	me-hip-s-u-n?	me-hip-s-u-n	me-hips-u-n
42	3d-3ns	ma-l m-ch-u-si-n	me-hip-s-u-si-n?	me-hip-s-u-si-n	me-hips-u-si-n
43	3p-3s	man-l ps-u-n	me-n-hipt-u-n	me-n-hipt-u-n	me-n-hipt-u-n
44	3p-3ns	man-l ps-u-si-n	me-n-hipt-u-si-n	me-n-hipt-u-si-n	me-n-hipt-u-si-n

Findings

The comparative study of phonemes, words and verb paradigms show differences and similarities among Limbu variants.

Differences: The above points prove that Chhatthare Limbu differs from other Limbu variants in the following points:

1. Chhatthare Limbu has voiced bilabial, stop series /b/, /d/ and /g/, voiceless, alveolar affricate /cH/ and palatal trill /r/ whereas they are absent in Panthare Limbu (Wiedert and Subba:1985) and Taplejungnge Limbu (Mikhailovsky:2003). Phedappe (Van Driem:1987) has voiced, bilabial stop /b/ but it doesn't have voiced, velar stop /g/, voiceless, alveolar affricate /cH/ and palatal trill /r/. Although /b/ occurs in Panthare or Taplejungnge dialect as a distinct phoneme in a situation like [ba] 'so' or 'for nothing' as against [pa] 'father', they dismiss the difference viewing that the contrast is not between major word classes for the first word being an adverb and the second being a noun.
2. All three dialects treat /cH/ as the allophone [cH] of the voiceless, alveolar, fricative /s/ and /r/ as the allophone [r] of the phoneme /l/.
3. Chhatthare Limbu has no vowel length contrast whereas the other dialects have.
4. Chhatthare Limbu has entirely different demonstrative pronouns.
5. Out of 44 forms of a verb for 'to beat' in the non-past form, Chhatthare Limbu differs from other dialects in 37 forms and in the past form it differs in 36 forms. In negative past form it differs from other dialects in 42 forms.
6. The second person object suffix is <-na> in 1→2 configuration whereas in other dialects it is <-ne>. The second person agent or subject prefix and object prefix in 3→2 configuration is <ka-> in Chhatthare Limbu whereas it is <ke-> in other dialects. The third person plural agent morpheme is <-mu> in 3→3 configurations in Chhatthare Limbu whereas it is <me-> in other dialects.
7. Negative prefix is <me--men> in other dialects but in Chhatthare it is <ma--man>.
8. The first person exclusive marker is <-ge> or <gya-> in other dialects but it is <-Na> in Chhatthare Limbu.
9. In 3s→1s configuration in Chhatthare Limbu, the first person singular object is double marked in both past and non-past forms as well as both affirmative and negative forms whereas in other dialects, the object is not double marked.
9. In 3s→1de and 3s-1pe configurations, the object is double marked in the Chhatthare Limbu unlike in other dialects.
10. Chhatthare differs from other dialects in its forms of person, number and case markers.

Now, I am in an embarrassing situation. As a student of linguistics, these points persuade me to call Chhatthare Limbu as a different language, not a dialect of Limbu. However, the spirit of Limbu in me prevents me from calling it a different language for fear that it might break the unity of the Limbus and the member of the Limbu community might curse me for this unpardonable sin. Therefore, I try to find out the common features of all Limbu variants which are shared by the Chhatthare Limbu.

Similarities: On the basis of above paradigms, we can trace out the following common features of Limbu:

- a. All Limbu dialects have a three number system-singular, dual and plural which are indicated by the suffixes affixed to verbs.
- b. All Limbu dialects have third person non-singular object number in the verb.
- c. The first person nonsingular has exclusive and inclusive systems marked by the suffixes that indicate presence or absence of the listener.
- d. In all Limbu dialects, in 2→1, 2→3 and 1→3 configurations, both agent and the patient are marked on the verb form.
- e. Third person singular subject or agent is unmarked.
- f. Second person is unchanged in all types of configurations such as 3→2, 2→3 and 2→1 except in 1→2 configuration in which a portmanteau is used for both agent and patient. <-na> is used in Chhatthare and <-ne> is used in other dialects.
- g. <-a> is a past morpheme in all dialects.
- h. A discontinuous negative morpheme is used in all dialects.

Chhatthare Limbu shares all the above features. After collecting the common features of Limbu, I search for reliable base to classify it as a dialect.

Analysis: Chhatthare dialect or language?

To ascertain whether Chhatthare is a dialect or a separate language it is necessary to know how these two are defined and differentiated in other languages. Let's study the following definitions:

1. David Crystal (2003) defines dialect as 'regionally or socially distinct variety of language' and it is 'identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures. Any language with a reasonably large number of speakers will develop dialects if there are geographical barriers separating groups of people from each other, or if there are divisions of social class.' If we follow this definition of 'dialect', then we reach the conclusion that Chhatthare is a dialect because it is spoken in a certain region called 'Chhatthar' separated by geographical barriers like

Nuwakhola on the east from where the Phedappe dialect diverges and by the Tamarkhola river on the south from where Panthare dialect starts and by the Arun river on the west from where Rai languages spread. Limbu language as mentioned in the preceding paragraph is spoken in a large area by a great number of population and it has, subsequently, developed dialects like Phedappe, Panthare, Taplejungnge and Chhatthare.

2. There is no really good way to distinguish between a 'language' and a 'dialect' because they are not objective scientific terms. By 'language' we mean generally accepted 'standard' or radio-talk languages of a country, while by 'dialects' we mean homely versions of it that vary from region to region and may not be pronounced the way the so-called 'language' is. If we accept this definition, again we are bound to classify it as a dialect as it is only a local version of Chhatthar. Radio Nepal doesn't air programmes in this variety of Limbu because it has no recognition as accepted 'standard'.
3. According to David Crystal (2003), if variations in pronunciation and lexical items are 'mutually intelligible', they are, generally, considered 'dialects' but if they are 'mutually unintelligible' to the native speakers, they are different 'languages' from a linguistic perspective. It further states that in practice, this criterion, however, is non-functional because Swedes, Norwegians and Danes are 'mutually intelligible' but they are referred to as different 'languages' because of different culture and nationality. Conversely, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka etc. are 'mutually unintelligible' but they are referred to as different 'dialects' of the Chinese 'language'. It means that 'dialects' are socially determined. If the speakers of the 'mutually unintelligible variants' are tied emotionally or culturally to each other, they can say that their linguistic variants are 'dialects' of the same 'language' but if they are emotionally unattached and culturally different, they can refer even 'mutually intelligible' variants as different 'languages'. Chhatthare Limbus are emotionally and culturally so tied to other Limbus that they don't want to designate the chatthare variant as a separate 'language'.
4. Max Weinreich is often quoted as saying "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy". It means that politics often decides what dialect will be a 'language'. Powerful or historically significant groups have a 'language' whereas smaller or weaker ones have 'dialects'. This expression is also contextual in determining the status of Chhatthare variant as a 'dialect' since it is weaker than other dialects in terms of the number of speakers and of the magnitude of the area. Moreover, government has set the 'standard dialect of Limbu' based on Panthare dialect and airs programs through radio in it. Apart from the use as a lingua franca among the Limbus, religious rituals are also performed in

Panthare dialect It naturally follows that all variants including Chhatthare are separate 'dialects' of Limbu.

Conclusion

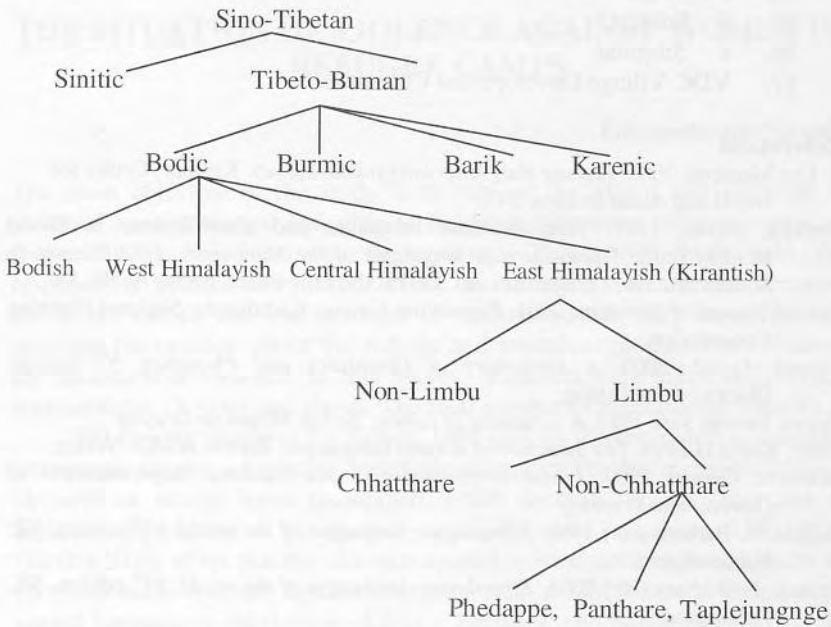
In spite of such strong arguments in favour of a dialect, the fact is that Chhatthare is very different from other dialects of Limbu or let's say from 'the standard dialect of Limbu'. These days, it is believed that children can learn better in their mother tongue than in Nepali because non-Nepali mother tongue speakers can not understand it. The research carried out by Jeff (2001:67) reports that only educated people in the community are proficient in Nepali. Though uneducated people can speak Nepali to meet routine needs, they would have great difficulty understanding or discussing complicated concepts such as religion, politics, emotional and technical issues in Nepali. In addition, their Nepali level is not enough for understanding necessary information about health, nutrition, etc and gaining employment. Maureen (2005:118) reports that almost children and elderly people of Bayung community can't speak Nepali well. It is estimated that a Bayung child needs at least 1-4 years' time to acquire enough Nepali to understand the speech of Nepali speaking teacher. These children need primary education in their mother tongue to acquire functional literacy and math skills after which they are able to gain competence and confidence to tackle other challenges of learning in Nepali. Otherwise, only highly genius, persevering and resourceful child can complete the primary education in Nepali medium and proceed to acquire higher education. Almost all the children can't complete the primary education because of the language problem. This case is applicable even to the Limbu children. They need primary education in their mother tongue. As Chhatthare Limbu is very different from other dialects, its speakers need primary education in their mother tongue. If it is classified as a dialect of Limbu, then, primary education is not delivered in this medium as *the present syllabi show. It is delivered only in the standard dialect. To the Chhatthare Children*, there is no difference from the viewpoint of difficulty in receiving education in Nepali and the standard Limbu dialect. In such a situation Varenkamp (1996:102) suggests that primary education should be delivered in the mother tongue dialect if it is very different from the language. It dispels the suspicion that primary education is delivered only in one dialect of a language.

Similarly Prof. Dr. Watters in personal communication has suggested a solution to the problem of classification. According to him, Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare Limbu are different languages but they are descended from the same root, the proto-Limbu. This Proto-Limbu first diversified into Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare groups. The non-Chhatthare group slowly diversified into Phedappe, Panthare and Tamarkhole dialects. The chronological relation between Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare dialects is

distant whereas the relation among the other dialects of the non-Chhatthare is close. Therefore, Chhatthare is hardly intelligible to the speakers of other dialects.

On the basis of the above discussion, it can be said that in the highest node, there is Sino-Tibetan which splits into Sinitic and Tibeto-Burman. Tibeto-Burman, in turn, can be divided into Bodic, Burmic, Barik and Karenic groups. The Bodic or Tibetic group is divided into Bodish, West Himalayish, Central Himalayish and East Himalayish. The East Himalayish or Kirantish is divided into Limbu and non-Limbu sub-groups and Limbu is further classified into Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare, which is further divided into Phedappe, Panthare and Taplejunge dialects. This phenomenon can be shown in the following tree diagram following Shafer (1966-1974) model:

Tree Diagramme 1: Family tree diagramme of Chhatthare Limbu



I think it will be the best solution as it preserves the spirit of unity among the Limbus by demonstrating the close family relation between Chhatthare and non-Chhatthare Limbu. On the other hand, it clearly exhibits the marked differences between the two languages. Thus, both community spirit and language reality are preserved.

Symbols and Abbreviations

- 1 First person
- 2 Second person
- 3 Third person
4. A Agent
5. d Dual
6. e Exclusive
7. I Inclusive
8. NEG Negative
9. NOM Nominalizer
10. NPT Non-past
11. ns Non-singular
12. O Object

13. p Plural
14. PT Past
15. S Subject
16. s Singular
17. VDC Village Development Committee

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RESEARCH NOTE

THE SITUATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN REFUGEE CAMPS

Ghanashyam Niroula

The main objective of the study is to explore the extent and situation of violence against women and girls in Beldangi Bhutanese refugee camps of Jhapa district based on the field survey. This paper deals with the respondents' opinion and attitude about the forms of violence that occurred inside the camps and the incidents of violence which they know. It also provides the opinion about the redress and treatment mechanism following the incidence of violence. In this survey, questions were asked only to the females aged 18 years and above. The total number of respondents were 93.

The Beijing platform for Action 1995 defines the term violence against women as the act of gender based violence that results in psychological, physical or sexual harm to women which includes threats, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty that occurs in public or private (UN 1995). Garske(2000) states that the violence against women perspective connects all forms of male violence against women – such as child sexual abuse, rape, sexual harassment, workplace violence, beatings, and homicide – across the different age of women's lives. It also recognizes a connection between male violence against women and other forms of domination based on race, sexual orientation, class, and other social setup. This perspective suggests an intimate interrelationship between women's freedom from violence and their freedom from political, economic, and social exploitation (Garske 2000).

A population report published by Johns Hopkins University, 1999 argues that around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Most often the abuser is a member of her own family (JHU 1999). The study conducted by SAATHI, 1997, has revealed the fact that violence against women and girls in Nepal was found in all class, caste, age and ethnicity. Nearly, almost all, i.e. 95 per cent of the respondents reported to know about violence against women and girls incidents. In 77 per cent of the cases, the perpetrators were the members of the family. The respondents reported the incidents of violence occurred at night. In the case of domestic violence, nearly, 58 per cent reported it as being a daily occurrence (SAATHI 1997). *Refugee*, a journal published by UNHCR, 1995 states that UNHCR staff realized the distribution of food in the refugee camps of Iraq in 1991 was disproportionate; the food was not going to families headed by women. The distributors were only men. The

refugee women suffered from: malnutrition, exploitation and suffering (UNHCR 1995).

It further points out that sexual violence and exploitation are a shockingly frequent experience for refugees – whether before flight, during it, or while living in camps. Rape is among the most terrible of the burdens that fall so heavily on refugee women. In Rwanda during the appalling genocide of 1994, a report commissioned by the foundation de France suggests that "virtually every adult woman or girl past puberty who was spared from massacre by the militias had been raped (Ibid: 4-5).

In the case of the Bhutanese refugees of Nepali origins, Acharya concluded that the 1985 census conducted in Bhutan stated to have discovered a lot of illegal immigrants and that result envisaged fear in the ruler about the possible repercussions on the future power equation in Drukpa kingdom. The Bhutanese authority subjected Nepalese people to atrocious treatment such as arbitrary arrests, torture and detentions without trial, village raids and widespread inhuman and degrading treatment of southern Bhutanese (people of Nepalese origin), including gang rape; the restriction of health services, a ban on the movement of essential commodities and people, confiscation of citizenship cards and termination of employment. Such treatment systematically made life for *Lhotsampas*, unbearable and finally drove them out of their land and their country Bhutan (Acharya 2004).

Nearly, 100,000 Bhutanese people were forced into exile as refugees in Nepal and India. The refugees in Nepal are living in seven UNHCR supervised camps in Jhapa and Morang districts of eastern Nepal since 1991. Among the seven camps, six camps are in Jhapa district and one is in Morang district. The Beldangi camp of Damak municipality includes Beldangi I, Beldangi II and Beldangi III (Subedi et al. 2003).

Opinion and Attitude about Violence

In the field survey, opinion and attitude towards violence was taken by asking multiple response questions to the respondents by reading the questionnaire. They were asked about the types of various forms of violence, redress and treatment mechanism, obstacles and barriers that prevent a woman from reporting an incidence. Opinion about illiteracy whether induces violence or not and the role of schooling in reducing it was also asked.

Knowledge about the Types of Violence

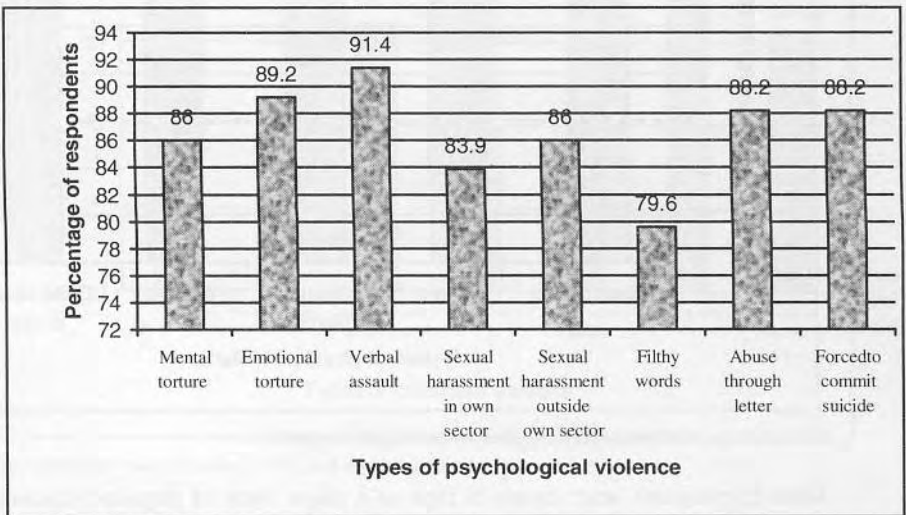
The respondents reported the various forms of psychological, physical and traditional practices as violence which exists inside the camps.

Psychological Violence

Mental torture, emotional torture, verbal assault, sexual harassment, abuse through letters, filthy words and inciting to commit suicide were the

psychological violence reported by the respondents. Among the types of psychological violence, 91.4 per cent reported verbal assault, followed by emotional torture (89.2%) and abuse through letters (88.2%). Similarly, 86 per cent of them reported knowing sexual harassment outside own sector and 83.9 per cent said they know sexual harassment outside own sector. Furthermore, 79.6 per cent reported prevalence of filthy words as the psychological violence.

Fig. 1: Knowledge and attitude about psychological violence



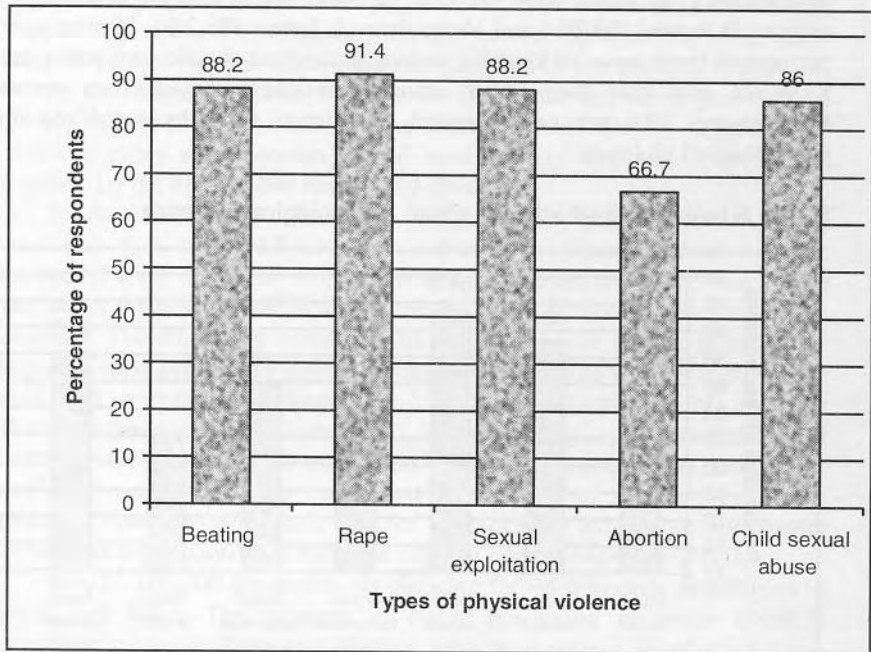
Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

Reporting about verbal assault as a form of psychological violence was quite high among other forms of violence.

Physical Violence

Rape, sexual exploitation, beating, abortion and child sexual abuse were the physical forms of violence reported by the respondents. Among the types of physical violence, 91.4 per cent of them reported knowing about rape whereas more than 88 per cent viewed knowing about sexual exploitation and beating. Similarly, 86 per cent reported prevalence of child sexual abuse followed by 66.7 per cent of them who reported knowing about the practice of abortion.

Fig. 2: Knowledge and attitude about physical violence



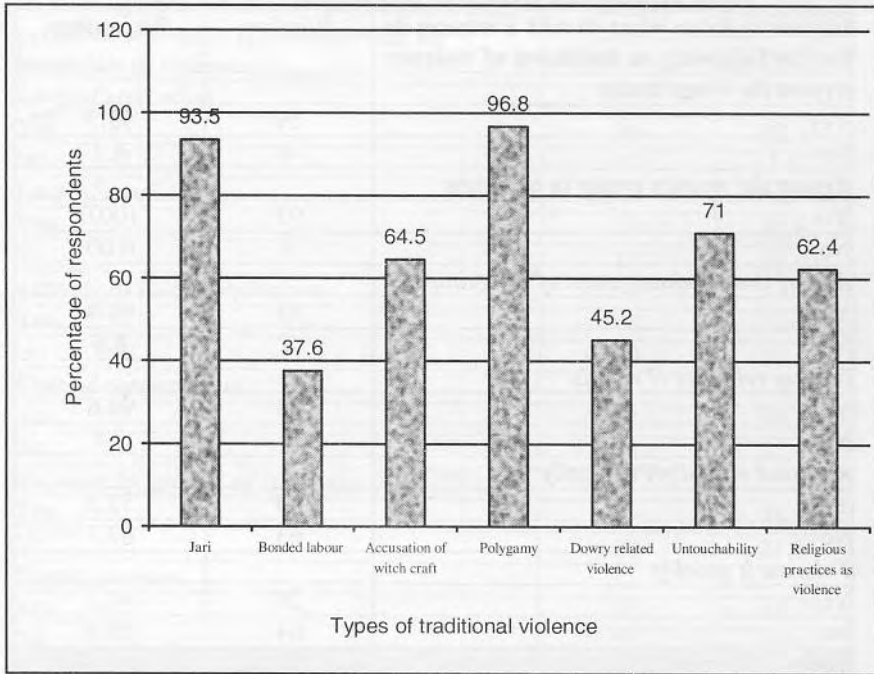
Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

More respondents were aware of rape as a major form of physical violence inside the camps where the significant proportion of them reported abortion as the form of physical violence.

Traditional Violence

Polygamy, jari, untouchability, accusation of witch-craft, religious practices and dowry related violence were the forms of traditional violence reported by the respondents. Among the types of traditional violence, 96.8 per cent reported knowing about polygamy followed by jari (93.5%), untouchability (71%) and accusation of witchcraft (64.5%). Similarly, 62.4 per cent of them reported religious practices, followed by 45 per cent who agreed on the prevalence of dowry, as the traditional form of violence.

Fig. 3: Knowledge and attitude about traditional violence



Percentage may exceed 100 due to multiple responses.

Participants in focus group discussion reported about the prevalence of elope marriage. They argued that marriage in the immature age leads to polygamy and that could be the cause of violence. Similarly, they also reported about the increasing prevalence of sexual exploitation of children.

Redress and Treatment Mechanism

The respondents were asked about their opinion towards redress and treatment mechanism following an incidence of violence. Almost all of them said they should report to the women group in the camps, followed by 95 per cent of them who agreed to report to the camp leader. Similarly, more than 94 per cent of them said to inform their relatives and friends, followed by 91.4 per cent who said to report the administration of the camps. Obviously, about 69 per cent of them disagreed to tolerate the violent incident.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their opinion about redress and treatment mechanism

In your opinion what should a woman do for the following an incidence of violence	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Report the camp leader</i>		
Yes	89	95.7
No	4	4.3
<i>Report the women group in the camp</i>		
Yes	93	100.0
No	0	0.00
<i>Report the administration of the group</i>		
Yes	85	91.4
No	8	8.6
<i>Inform relatives /Friends</i>		
Yes	88	94.6
No	5	5.4
<i>Respond verbally/Physically</i>		
Yes	30	32.3
No	63	67.7
<i>Tolerate it quickly</i>		
Yes	29	31.2
No	64	68.8
Total	93	100.0

Percentage and number may exceed 100 and 93 due to multiple responses.

The participants in focus group discussion said the victim should be conscious and inform the camp management committee. They said the case of rape and physical torture has to be reported to the sub-sector head through which it reaches the camp supervisor.

Obstacles and Barriers

The respondents were asked about obstacles and barriers that prohibit a woman from reporting an incidence of violence. A high proportion of them reported lack of education (92%), followed by fear of repercussion (87.1%), lack of confidence (80.6%), attitude of male domination (78.5%) and to keep marriage intact for children (77.4%) were the obstacles and barriers that prohibit a woman from reporting an incidence of violence.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of the respondents by perceived reasons that prohibit a woman from reporting an incidence of violence

In your opinion what may be the cause that prohibits a woman from reporting an incidence of violence	Number	Percentage
<i>Lack of education</i>		
Yes	86	92.5
No	7	7.5
<i>Lack of confidence</i>		
Yes	75	80.6
No	18	19.4
<i>Attitude of male domination</i>		
Yes	73	78.5
No	20	21.5
<i>Fear of repercussion</i>		
Yes	81	87.1
No	12	12.9
<i>No place to go/lack of support</i>		
Yes	73	78.5
No	20	21.5
<i>Family prestige</i>		
Yes	71	76.3
No	22	23.7
<i>To keep marriage intact for children</i>		
Yes	72	77.4
No	21	22.6
<i>Financial dependency</i>		
Yes	67	72.0
No	26	28.0
Total	93	100.0

Percentage and number may exceed 100 and 93 due to multiple responses.

The participants in focus group discussion said due to fear, lack of confidence, family prestige and economic dependency women do not report the incidents. The reason for not reporting the case of molestation, rapes, etc. by young girls was fear of being socially humiliated, loss of family prestige and being unworthy for marriage.

Most of the respondents agreed on illiteracy as the main cause of violence. More than 67 per cent of them strongly agreed, 23.7 per cent of them agreed only, whereas, 8.6 per cent disagreed on illiteracy being the cause of violence.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents by their opinion about illiteracy as the main cause of violence

<i>In your opinion is Illiteracy the main cause of violence against women?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Strongly agree	63	67.7
Agree	22	23.7
Disagree	8	8.6
Total	93	100.0

Participants in focus group discussion reported illiteracy as the main cause of violence. They said violence inside the family is rampant among the illiterate. Traditionally, culture and norms are strictly followed in their family where women's position is inferior to men.

Prevalence of Violence

The prevalence of violence was found to be more among the illiterate women. Nearly, two-fifth of the respondents strongly agreed about the prevalence of violence among the illiterate, followed by 38.7 per cent who agreed only. Similarly, 18.3 per cent of them disagreed and 1.1 per cent strongly disagreed about it.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of respondents by their opinion about prevalence of violence

<i>Do you think the prevalence of violence is more among illiterate women in your camp?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Strongly agree	39	41.9
Agree	36	38.7
Disagree	17	18.3
Strongly disagree	1	1.1
Total	93	100.0

Clearly, more respondents were aware of the prevalence of violence among the illiterate women.

Exposure of Illiterate Women to Violence

The respondents were asked about the reasons for the exposure of illiterate women to violence. More than five dozens of the respondents reported women do not understand the situation, followed by 73.1 per cent of them reporting that women cannot console their husband. Similarly, 64.5 per cent reported they cannot keep good relation with their in-laws and were exposed to violence.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of respondents by perceived reasons about exposure of illiterate women to violence

In your opinion why illiterate women are more exposed to violence?	Number	Percentage
<i>Can not console the husband</i>		
Yes	68	73.1
No	35	26.9
<i>Do not understand the situation</i>		
Yes	78	83.9
No	15	16.1
<i>Get angry fast</i>		
Yes	59	63.4
No	41	36.6
<i>Are more jealous</i>		
Yes	50	53.8
No	43	46.2
<i>Can not keep good relation with in-laws</i>		
Yes	60	64.5
No	33	35.5
<i>Do not take care of children properly</i>		
Yes	51	54.8
No	49	45.2
Total	93	100.0

Percentage and number may exceed 100 and 93 due to multiple responses

Participants in focus group discussion said that illiterate women do not want to disclose the incidents due to which they suffer again and again.

Role of Schooling in Eliminating Violence

A large proportion i.e. 86 per cent of the respondents agreed that school could play a major role in providing children with information related to violence against women and girls. Similarly, 14 per cent of them disagreed on the same matter.

Table 6: Percentage distribution of respondents by their opinion about role of schooling in eliminating violence

Do you think schools can and should play a major role in providing children with information related to violence against women and girls?	Number	Percentage
Yes	80	86.0
No	13	14.0
Total	93	100.0

Participants in focus group discussion opined that schools' education is only related to student's career. They further added cultural barrier is so strong that the education can not be implemented in practice.

Reporting on a Single Incident of Violence against Women and Girls Knowledge of any Incident of Violence

The questions of another section invited respondents to comment on their experience of any incident of violence. A large number of them (88%) made the point that they were knowledgeable about the incidents of violence inside the camps.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of respondents reporting any incident of violence

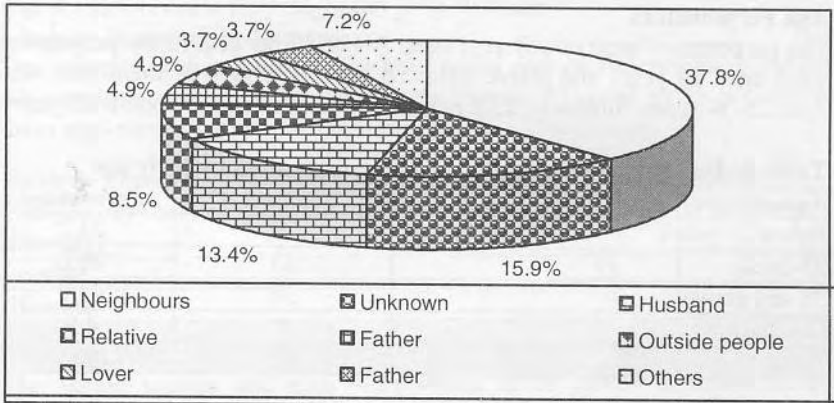
<i>Do you personally know of any verbal psychological or physical incidence of violence against a refugee woman?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	82	88.2
No	11	11.8
Total	93	100.0

The most of the respondents were aware about the incidents of violence. Clearly, the violent incidents were frequent inside the camps.

Identity of the Perpetrators

Among the total respondents, more than a quarter of them reported neighbours as the perpetrators (37.8%), followed by unknown persons (15.9%), husbands (13.4%) and relatives (8.5%). Similarly, 4.9 per cent were the people outside the camps and fathers whereas 3.7 per cent were boy friends and teachers and 7.2 per cent were others.

Fig. 4: Identity of the Perpetrators

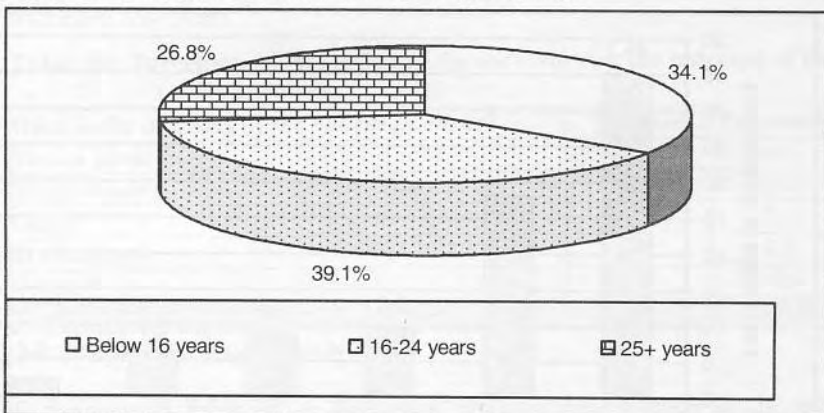


Obviously, due to the availability of leisure time, the males are more prone to engage in violence. Furthermore, the dense settlement of the camps has also increased the level of violence.

Age of Survivors

Younger girls and women were more victimized in the incidents. Majority of the survivors were aged 16-24 years (39.1%), followed by the survivors aged below 16 years (34.1%). Similarly, 26.8 per cent of them were aged 25 years and above.

Fig. 5: Percentage Distribution of Survivors by Age



Participants in focus group discussion said especially, the teenagers and orphan girls were more victimized. Furthermore, they added the perpetrators seduce the girls.

Age Perpetrators

The perpetrators were of different ages. About 44 per cent of the perpetrators were aged 35 years and above followed by 28 per cent of them who were aged 25-34 years. Similarly, 23.2 per cent of them were aged below 25 years.

Table 8: Percentage distribution of the perpetrators by their age

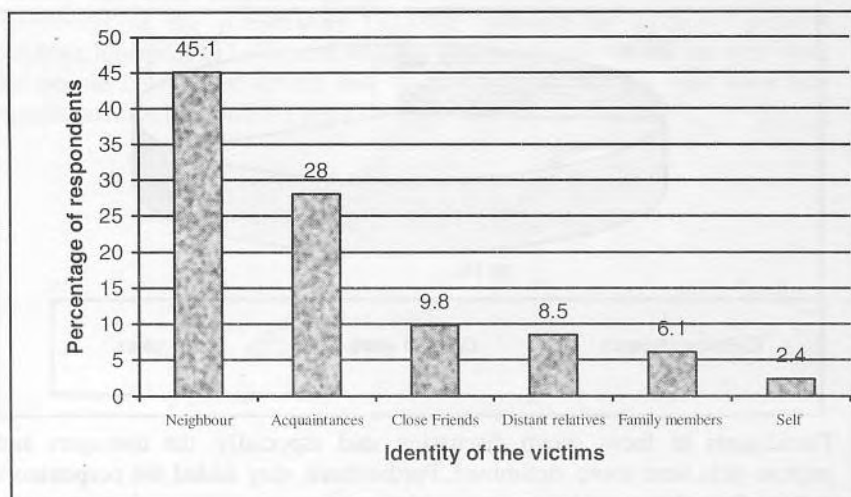
<i>Age-group of Perpetrator</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Below 25 years	19	23.2
25-34	23	28.0
35 and above	36	43.9
Don't know	4	4.9
Total	82	100.0

It seems that the majority of the perpetrators were aged 35 years and above. Not surprisingly, the involvement of matured persons in the crime was high.

Identity of the Survivors

Majority of the respondents reported the survivors were their neighbours. Nearly, half of the survivors were their neighbours followed by acquaintances (28%), close friends (9.8%) and distant relatives (8.5%). Similarly, 6.1 per cent reported family members as the survivors, followed by 2.4 per cent of them who reported self as the survivors.

Fig. 6: Identity of the Survivors



Participants in focus group discussion reported that even going toilet at night was not safe because they might fall prey of violence.

Literacy Status of the Survivors

The majority of the survivors who have fallen prey of violence were literate. About 65 per cent of the survivors were literate, followed by 35 per cent of them who were illiterate.

Table 9: Percentage distribution of the survivors by literacy status

<i>Can you say that the survivors are literate or illiterate?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Literate	53	64.6
Illiterate	29	35.4
Total	82	100.0

The young women and girls were found to be more victimized in the incidents. So, the proportion of the literate survivors tends to be larger.

Frequency and Time of Act of Violence

The most of the respondents reported that the incidents occurred in the evening and at night. More than three-fourth of violent incidents occurred occasionally, followed by daily (12.2%) and weekly (6.1%). Similarly, 3.7 per cent of the incidents of violence occurred monthly.

Outcome of the Violent Incident

Mental stress and injuries were the main outcomes of the violent incidents. Nearly, four dozens survivors were suffering from mental stress, followed by small injuries (36.6%) and death (7.3%). Similarly, 4.9 per cent of them were trafficked and others.

Table 10: Percentage distribution of the survivors by the outcome of the violent incident

<i>What is the outcome of the violent incident?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Mental stress	38	46.3
Small injuries	30	36.6
Death	6	7.3
Trafficking	4	4.9
Others*	4	4.9
Total	82	100.0

* Broken limbs/fracture, morbidity.

Participants in focus group discussion reported mental stress as the main outcome of violent incidents. Furthermore, they added that use of stress reducing medicine has increased in the camps.

Main Causes of Violence

The respondents were asked about the main causes of violent incidents. Nearly, five dozens of the respondents reported dominating nature was the main causes of violence, followed by 56.1 per cent of them who reported abuse of alcohol as the cause. The most of the respondents i.e. 96 per cent disagreed that the sexual problem as the main cause of violence, followed by 91.5 per cent who disagreed that burning the food and in-laws matter as the cause of violence. Similarly, 89 per cent of them disagreed that going outside without informing the husband could be the main cause of violence.

Table 11: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their opinion about the cause of violence

Cause of violence	Number	Percentage
<i>Alcohol abuse</i>		
Yes	46	56.1
No	36	43.9
<i>Dominating nature</i>		
Yes	57	69.5
No	25	30.5
<i>In laws Matter</i>		
Yes	7	8.5
No	75	91.5
<i>Second wife</i>		
Yes	12	14.6
No	70	85.4
<i>Economic problems</i>		
Yes	30	36.6
No	52	63.4
<i>Neglect Children</i>		
Yes	7	8.5
No	75	91.5
<i>Going outside without informing husband</i>		
Yes	9	11.0
No	73	89.0
<i>Burns the food</i>		
Yes	7	8.5
No	75	91.5
<i>Sexual problem</i>		
Yes	3	3.7
No	79	96.3
Total	82	100.0

Note: Percentage and number may exceed 100 and 82 due to multiple responses

The key informant espoused that lack of fulfilment of basic needs and frustration was the main cause of violence. She said that lack of fulfilment of basic needs has obliged the young girls to sex work. Recently, the facilities like kerosene have cut off. In place of kerosene, they get bio-briquette, it takes minimum twenty minutes to burn and a long time is spent on preparing the meal. Delaying in preparing the meal has been the cause of wife-battering.

Reduction of the Problems in Future

The respondents were asked what might be the ways of reducing the problems of violence in future. Majority of them said education, training and awareness could be the solution to reducing violence. More than 67 per cent of the respondents reported training and awareness, followed by 6.5 per cent of them who reported legal enforcement and banned of alcohol. Similarly, 4.3 per cent of them reported understanding between each other and gender equality might be the solution for reducing the problem.

Table 12: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their opinions for the reduction of problems in the future

<i>How do you think the problems like yours can be reduced in future?</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Education, training and awareness	63	67.7
Love each other	9	9.7
Strict legal enforcement	6	6.5
Banning of alcohol	6	6.5
Understanding	4	4.3
Gender equality	4	4.3
Don't know	4	4.3
Durable solution of refugee problem	3	3.2
Other*	4	4.4
Total	93	100.0

**Tolerate/ Involve in own work/ Night guide*

Percentage total may exceed 100 due to multiple responses

Participants in focus group discussion said women must not tolerate the husband's persecution. Unified voice of both male and female against violence is required. They said the incidence should not be hidden and strong

legal punishment for the offenders is required. Control of alcohol in entering the camps may be helpful in reducing violence.

Major Findings

This paper, based on 2006 field survey data, deals with the situation and extent of violence against women and girls in Beldangi Bhutanese refugee camps of Jhapa district and ways for the reduction of violence in future.

Majority of respondents (91.4%) were familiar with prevalence of verbal assault. Among the other types of psychological violence, emotional torture appears to be higher (89%), followed by abuse through letters (88%), mental torture and sexual harassment (86%). Beating, rape, sexual exploitation, abortion and child sexual abuse were the physical forms of violence reported by the respondents. Among the types of physical violence, reporting of rape seems to be quite high (91%), followed by sexual exploitation and beating (88%), child sexual abuse (86%) and abortion (67%). Similarly, jari, bonded labour, accusation of witchcraft, polygamy, dowry related violence, untouchability and religious practices were the forms of violence reported by the respondents. Among these types of violence, prevalence of polygamy was higher (97%), followed by jari (93%), untouchability (71%) and religious practices (62%).

Almost all the respondents agreed that they should report the women group in the camps, followed by 95 per cent of them who agreed that they should report the camp leader. Only 31 per cent agreed that they should tolerate it quietly.

The prevalence of violence was more among the illiterate women. More than 41 per cent strongly agreed, whereas 38.7 per cent agreed only on this matter. Among the various reasons for the exposure of illiterate women to violence, 83.9 per cent of the respondents said that they do not understand the situation. Likewise, 73.1 per cent said the women cannot console their husbands.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents agreed that schools could play a role in providing children with information related to violence against women and girls. But the participants in focus group discussion said school education is not practical enough to prevent violence and cannot be implemented at home.

Overall, eight per cent of the respondents reported that they were knowledgeable about any incident of violence and the perpetrators were neighbours, unknown person, husband, relatives, family members and boy friends. It was found that, the most of the survivors of the violent incidents were below 24 years of age. Among the survivors, 65 per cent of them were literate and rest of them were illiterate.

In most of the incidents of violence, weapons were not used. Only physical force was used, but in the cases of domestic violence sticks and household utensils were often used. The most of the respondents agreed that alcohol abuse, dominating nature, economic problem and second wife were the main causes of violence.

Nearly, 68 per cent of the respondents reported education, training and awareness may be the solution for the reduction of problems relating to violence against women and girls. The other ways that might be the solution reported by them were strict legal enforcement, banned of alcohol and the durable solution of refugee.

Conclusion

The prevalence of violence against women and girls is rampant in the Beldangi Bhutanese refugee camps, suggesting to launch education, training and awareness programmes to empower women and involving women and men in income generating resources.

The women are conscious about following an incidence of violence. They are aware that ignoring the incident and tolerating it quietly is not the solution to violence so the case should be reported to the concerned authority.

Eighty six per cent of the respondents believe that the role of school is crucial in providing children with information related to violence against women and girls but the participants in focus group discussions said cultural barrier is so strong that it blocks the schools' education and is not implemented at home.

Nearly two-third of the survivors of the violent incidence was below 24 years of age. The large proportions of the survivors were unmarried. These show the unmarried and young girls are more victimized. The time of act of violence was mostly in the evening and at night. In most of the incidents physical force was used and occurrence of rape is frequent in the camps.

Dominating nature and abuse of alcohol were the main causes of violence. The respondents reported agencies like BRWF, UNHCR, CMC helping the survivors and assisting the women during the problems. They were satisfied with the services of the assisting agencies.

Among the causes of violence, dominating nature and abuse of alcohol was the main. Dominating nature was reported by nearly 70 per cent of the respondents, followed by a significant per centage of them who reported alcohol abuse as the main cause. Other causes like in-laws matter, neglecting children, burning the food and sexual problem were nominal.

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RESEARCH NOTE

ANGUISHED CRY OF A DEFEATED RULER: A RAGA SONG COMPOSED BY RANAJIT MALLA

Ramesh K. Dhungel

It is well known that Ranajit Malla (b. 1703, reign 1722-1769) was the last king of the Kingdom of Bhaktapur also known in the later part of the Malla rule in the Nepalmandala (the Kathmandu valley and the areas surrounding the Valley) as Bhadagaun. He was the ritual father (*mitabā*) of Prithvi Narayan Shah, founder of modern Nepal. A ritual friendship had been established between Ranajit's son Viranarasimha Malla and Prithvi Narayan Shah while both of them were Crown Princes of their respected kingdoms, Bhaktapur and Gorakha. This was the reason why even after the defeat of the Mallas in the final war fought between the Malla and Gorkhali forces in Bhaktapur in 1769 Prithvi Narayan had offered various options to Ranajit Malla. He even asked Ranajit if he wanted to become a local ruler of the area covering Banepa, Dhulikhel and surrounding villages popularly known as *satagaun*. Choices were left open for him even to become the local ruler of any other area in and around the valley except the three major cities, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan. However, Ranajit Malla declined to live in Nepal as a puppet local chieftain working under the Gorkhali rule. He rather expressed his willingness to go to Benaras and spend the rest of his life taking refuge to religious activities. Prithvi Narayan Shah happily agreed to provide for necessary arrangements with a fund to cover Ranajit's expenses for travel and accommodation in Benaras with a royal standard.

Ranjit's decision to go to Benaras, however, was not his happy choice. It was just a better one compared to other very humiliating options left for him including the one accepting a position of a local ruler of smaller area in and around the Kathmandu valley. The *raga* poem composed by Ranajit Malla clearly highlights his inner feeling. It seems that he must have been guided by a thought that spending the rest of his life as a puppet chieftain of a smaller area under Prithvi Narayan Shah's rule would not have been any better than being under house arrest ('being in a cage' in his poetic expression). Looking at the situation that Ranajit was facing that time, his thought can be viewed as an ideal one indeed. If he had accepted the option of becoming a local ruler, it would have been a matter of deep insult and a cause of inner pain for a person like Ranajit Malla who was once among the most respected kings of an independent, historically older and glorious kingdom in the valley. Despite his struggling long rule of about five decades Ranajit was always very

popular within his kingdom. This was why, without any doubt, Ranajit decided to go for a *tirthavasa*¹ in Benaras.

The final departure from his native and most beloved place after a devastating and humiliating defeat, however, was not an easy thing to cope with for Ranajit. He was deeply shattered and crying from the bottom of his heart. Thus, it seems that in order to cope with such a saddened situation, he had used his literary ability by expressing his grief through this *raga* poem. The source manuscript from where this poem is excerpted itself tells that Ranajit had composed this poem while he was on the way to a final spiritual shelter (*tirthavasa*) in Benaras leaving the Kathmandu Valley for ever. The same source also tells that Ranajit Malla had even sung this *raga* after having a final glance at his lost Kingdom Bhaktapur and the entire valley while taking a rest at a *cautari*² located at the pass at Candragiri hill near Kirtipur. The eyewitness description of the account also tells that Ranajit was deeply crying with unstopped flow of tears in his eyes while singing the *raga* and having a final glance at the Valley. Since the hilltop of Candragiri is the last place from where one can have a final glance at the Valley, it seems that Ranajit was having a very hard time to proceed further for his already started journey because that would take him away from the sight of his native place for ever (see facsimile of the account).³

There are numerous other Newari devotional poems composed by Ranajit Malla available in written and oral forms. In fact, composing devotional and *raga* poems was a quite common practice among the Newar rulers of the late Malla period. King Siddhinarasimha Malla of Patan, Pratap Malla and Bhaskar Malla of Kantipur, Jitamitra Malla and Ranajit Malla of Bhaktapur seem to have been leading among the Newar rulers with literary ability. The devotional songs of the late Malla period seem to have been composed in *raga* form and dominated by the *rasa* known as *karuna* and *vira*. However, the number of songs composed with the *rasa* known as *sringara* is not small in number at all. The *rasa* employed in the poem published here is *karuna*.

Ranajit Malla's present *raga* poem is an excerpt from a historical account of Nepal collected in the 1840s by B. H. Hodgson, British Resident in Kathmandu, and it is known popularly as *General Mathabarasimha Thapa Account of Nepal under the Gorkhali Rulers* (Hodgson Manuscripts Vol. 45 (scroll)).⁴ It must have been written originally in the contemporary Newari script and perhaps transcribed later by a Newar writer into Nagari as part of the historical account. In the account there is a quite long description of Bhaktapur with special focus on the final war fought in Bhaktapur between the united force of the three Malla Kingdoms of the valley and Gorkha. It covers the details of the war and the aftermath of the war including the conversation held between Prithvi Narayan Shah and Ranajit Malla and the final departure of Ranajit from Kathmandu.

Translation of the poem (English)

Oh Ram! Oh Ram! How could I survive without remembering Nepal?
The evil enemy destroyed me now!! // ⁵

[There is] no more shelter [for me] in the country of twelve thousand
[households]!
A foreign land has become my abode now on! Oh Ram! Oh Ram!! //1//⁶

As the fruit of the sin that I committed in my previous life, I have already
seen what I have not even heard of!
There is no point of living in a cage! Oh Ram! Oh Ram!! //2//

I pray million times to Goddess Nava-Durga and God Ganesa!
For a pardon over the crimes I committed! Oh Ram! Oh Ram!! //3//

To how many people the grief of pain I express?
No one can make me free from this anguish! Oh Ram! Oh Ram!! //4//

Kept on showing affection, the evil [conspirator] deceived [me]!
Alas! Alas! What sort of thinking [of mine] caused this? Oh Ram! Oh Ram!!⁷
//5//

[To] this Ranajit Malla, the jewel of the Solar Dynasty,
A shelter in heaven is offered by Goddess Taleju! Oh Ram! Oh Ram!! //6//

Transliteration of the poem from its original Newari

haya haya rama rama gathe maluma nepala saturi durajananan phutakalayo
ava// //

jhinte dola raje samadatayo jita vasa. videsaya vasa jula thani ava rama
rama//1//

hathujana bhaya papam manenagusoya dhuno // panjalasa cona maduthe
jinona rama rama //2//

navadurga ganesyake sahasra ji vinati yana // lasalapi aparadha chemayaau
rama rama //3//

lhaya gohmayake jina dusaya vedana: thugu pasa pheniao suna na rama
rama //4//

piratiyana vacona chalayata durajanana // haya haya chu nugala jula rama
rama //5//

suryavamsi kulamani sri ranajita malla // talejuna vila vaikunthavasa rama
rama //6//

Facsimile of the manuscript containing the raga poem

सनीलेवितिगरिन्वैसभयोअवसमीलाइकावाहिंछुकेहिविराडुनुभयाकोछे
नकाशिवासपायाकुछभनिवितिगरिन्कुवेमहाआनन्दगरिवस्याउहंपछि
राजान्नजितमल्लरानीभाषासंक्रांतिकाअधील्लादीनसयत्तयादियाचा
रवीनअधीसदीरकेहसिंवेध्यात्आयारुठाराजाकाहजूरमाआइवितिग
पांराजानीलाइरअवधुतसीलाइपोराकदीपगयाकुइदिनअधीअतु
लगाभवानिकास्थानमाजाइम्कछीनविस्तारगरिजपल्लोवगसिंदसंगरि
मनचोक्पदक्षणागरिराजानीडोलामाचछीअवधुतसीप्रतिमनअधी
कारिपारथभगरिलेपतिघोडाबछिदवरिवापुपुस्यानेगरिसुनछीकावाप
निसक्यासहरकाप्रगाहसुवेरैआभयाकाथियातिनहसलाइआसिरवापदी
सरासरकातिपुपुप्पाइसीनदवरिमावासदियाभीनिपल्लराजानीवापहा
प्राछीराहसुबन्नीषानामाछनतिनहसलाइवन्नीछुटाइहामिहसलाइविछु
मतिममपयाउनआउनपायासुतापरसुगंधदुप्याथियोभनिदपरिकेह
सिंवेध्यात्तसंगहजूरमावितिगनपगयाइसैमाफिकभामहाराजयथीतारा
परासाहकाकुकुमलेछीराहसुकनशकाइभेटगराथीदीयातिछीराहसुम
येअछुतसीसाहेविरामीथियारविछुमतिनप्यावहिपाराभुक्तभयोउ
कीसीसतिगइवछीगइइवसिलेसस्कारगयायहाउपानराजाराजि
तमल्लश्रीकासिवासनिमित्तजादाचरुगरिपर्वतमम्बठिनेपालकिसामाया
नेनेपालनर्फहेरियकछीनश्रासगरिउसैघरियकगतियस्तानहको॥

राग ॥ रागमहायरागमगधे मल्लमनेनेपालसतरिडसुननं फुत्तकलओआव॥ १॥ जि
नेरोलभनेममदतयेतितवासविंदशयावासकुनथनिआवगलसम॥ १॥ हथुननेभयापापेम
डेनसुसायभुनो॥ पजलसनेनोमदुथेजिडेनरागराम॥ २॥ नदइगोशोभ्याकिसमअजिनिनी
याना॥ लखलपिअपराधेमायाचोसमरा॥ ३॥ द्वायगोलयकिनिरडुवसोवदना॥ थुगपा
साफेनिओलुनानरागराम॥ ४॥ फिलीयानावनोलुलयातडुनेन॥ हायहायछुनुसनुनरा
गराम॥ ५॥ सुथवैसिकुनमनिओरसजितगधव॥ तेलसुनविनेवडौवासरगराम॥ ६॥

राग ११ श्रीविमिकिराग १२ श्रीहरिराग १३ श्रीवैद्यराग १४ श्रीवयानराग १५ श्री
मनोरथराग १६ श्रीजयराग १७ श्रीजशत्रराग १८ श्रीभोजराग १९ लसयाआया
का श्रीभुपतिराग २० श्रीवैद्यनिकराग २१ श्रीमन्मथराग २२ भिकोईकोखिलडमा
आइराजायाका श्रीभुपालराग २३ तन्कापुव श्रीमोवा २४ डेनकापुवहस २५ मथेपेर
मानन्दमन्त्रवायनाइगुदक्षिराखिलवितलपुगरिदिकनपल्लानुवाकोदमारजायाका श्री
जयेनवान २५ श्रीसुधवान २६ श्रीभीवावान २७ श्रीविचित्रवान २८ श्रीजयदेववान
२९ इरकाछेगदेविसाहिकहाया कार्कीमाआइराजायाका अकुलमंडनसाह ३० इर
काछेगहसमथेलमुंडमालाइराजायाका श्रीयशोवमुसाह ३१ इरकाछेरातनुमथे
माहिला श्रीजनकुमारइयसाहलाइत्पाइजानुत्पाउननिमित्तआजलेहाततिथीकास
वेपेचलोडगोशपाडलेसक्षेपविदाब्राह्मणयसमगहेहिओभयाकानागाथोरसुकन
पुवहस थापाकुसालगुनामास्कीगनागेहपाडथेमथिलेअहमगरपावहसपनिप्रवेज
माहादलामेधमगरिचेकेनमन्मगरिकनशनकाविचमादमरिधेरिकथोकगरिगोश
कादवागमिजपमिजरागनालाडमायापाडिआदिनेपराजयजेनामपदि

सनीनेवितगरिनवेसभयोअवसमीलाइयावाहिंछुकेहिविरागनुभयाकोछे
नकाशियासपायाकुछभनिवितिगरिनदुवैमहाआनन्दगरिवस्य। उहंपछि
राताहनजितमल्लरानीमाध्यासेक्रांतिकाअघील्लादीनसस्येतसदियोबा
रवीनअघीसदरैकेहसिबध्यात् आयाखुछाराजाकाहजमाआइवितिग
पागजारानीलाइरअवधुतसीलाइपोराकदीपगया। दुइदिनअघीश्रीतु
लनाभवानिकास्थानमाजाइमकछीनविस्तरगरिजपल्लोवगसिदसंगरि
पुनचोकेपदक्षीणागरिराजारानीडोलामाबठीअवधुतसीप्रतिमनअघी
कारिपारथभजरिनेपतिघोडाबठिदवरिवाटपुस्थानगरिसुनकोकाबाट
निसक्या। महरकापुनाहसुधैरैमाभयाकाधियातिनहसुलाइआसिरवादी
सरासरकातिपुपुपाउसीनदवरिमावासदियाभोलिपल्लराजारानीवाटहा
घाछोराहसुबन्दीबानामाछन्तिनहसुलाइबन्दीछुटाइहामिहसुलाइबिछु
मतिमम्मपयाउनआउनपायासुनापरसुगंधकुत्याथियोभानिसदरैकेह
सिविध्यातसंगहजुरमावितिगनपगया। उसैमाफिकश्रीमहराजयथीतारा
यशासाहकाकुक्रमलेछोराहसुकनशकाइभेट्गरायीदीयातिछोराहसु
धेअभ्युतसीसाहेविरामीथियारबिछुमतिनपावहिपारानुक्तभयो। उ
कीखीसतिगडबछोराइवसिलेसस्कारगया। यहाउपानराजारागजि
तमल्लश्रीकामिनासनिमनुजादाचक्रगरिपर्वतमावठिनेपालकोमाध्या
नेनेपालतर्फहेरियकछीनश्रीमगरि। उसैघरियकगीतयस्तानहको॥

रग ॥ हायहायराजरागधेमनुभनेनेपालसतुरिइस्तननैफुतकतयोआव॥ १॥ जि
लेबोलगनेसमदतयोजितवासविदेशयावासकुलथतिआवगमम॥ १॥ हथुजतभयापापम
उनामुसोयधुनो॥ फजलसबोनामुथेजिडेनराभराम॥ २॥ नवदुर्गागोभ्याकेसहजिदिनीती
याना॥ लजलपिअपराधेमायाश्रीभराम॥ ३॥ हायगोलयाकेजिनदुखसावदना। थुगपा
साफेनिओसुनानराभराम॥ ४॥ फितीयानाबनेनछल्यातदुरनेन॥ हायहायछुगमहदुनरा
भराम॥ ५॥ सुथेवैसिकुलमनिश्रीभरानितमद्व॥ तलेननविलेवैअवसाशभराम॥ ६॥

यस्तानहकीगीतवांधीगादअधुपातगरिनेपालक्षेत्रकोदसतगरिसरसरकासितफे
गया। वहापुपापछि। एकमेत्राजन्मभैगमालाभभइन्फेरि२०दीनमारनिगंगला
भभइन्नेपालीसम्बत८८१श्वेसुशुदि१०दसहरकादीनराजारनजितमल्लसुर्यव
शमाउत्पेनभयाकाअनकाशनावहनालमापरलोकाभयाअग्निसेस्कारगर्दिव
हनालवाटस्कनागमाथिआइपदक्षीणागरिअग्निमाफालहलिसहगामिनि
भैगया। चारदीनअघीस्कयोमीआइराजारनजीतमल्लसेगस्कानगरिफकीगिया
कोकसैलेदेजेननहदिखीनेपालमाशुद्धसुर्यवसिलोपभैगया॥ नेपालतिनस
हरकागताउरआपगतउघीजीजिनिगरिनीराजराजिउतजनेगीजेपरीजे

Notes

1. In Hindu tradition elderly people may like to spend their *banaprastha* and *sanyasa* days (life after the age of 50 and 75 respectively) by devoting themselves to only spiritual activities at a religious pilgrimage centre such as Benaras in India and that type of living is known popularly as *tirthavasa*.
2. A resting place on walking trails locally constructed with stones in the form of a platform. A *cautari* usually would have a single or multiple plinths at the front edge and some time at the back wall of the platform topped with beautiful stone slabs for sitting. In order to provide shed for the travellers mostly a pair of banyan and pipal trees or some time even *sami* or other auspicious trees are planted at a *cautari*.
3.yaha upramta raja ranajita malla. sri kasivasa nimitta jada candragiri parpatama cadhi nepalako mayale nepalatarpha heri yakachina visrama gari usai ghari yaka gita yasta tarhako // (the text of the raga here)
yastatarhako gitabamdhi gai asrupata gari nepala ksetrako darsana gari sarasara kasitarpha gaya.
4. I thank Sukrasagar Shrestha and Sabita Vaidya for their help in translating this eighteenth century Newari poem into Nepali.
A note in English by Brian Hodgson written on the top of the account (in scroll) tells that this account was collected and prepared under the command and sponsorship of General Mathabarsimha Thapa. It was later given to the king of Nepal and preserved in the Royal Palace. Hodgson had acquired this original copy from an English man named Mr. Mortimer who had got it earlier from King Rajendravikram Shah (MSS/Hodgson/volume 45/British Library, London). Mr. Mortimer had visited Nepal and submitted his survey and observation report to the British Government in India while Hodgson was British Resident in Nepal.
5. This beginning verse seems to have been composed as the refrain or title stanza of the *raga* because unlike other verses there is no number given to this. Inclusion of serial number begins only after this stanza. Thus there are seven verses altogether in this poem but only six of them are numbered.
6. Real sense of this line would be "I am forced to take refuge in the foreign land now."
7. Actual meaning of this line would be "how I failed to understand the conspiracy of the evil enemy which brought this devastation on me?"

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मूल नेवारी (Newari Original)

१. ॥ हाय हाय राम राम गथे मलुम नेपाल सतुरि दुरजननं फुनकलयो आव ॥ ॥
२. भित्ते दोल राजे समदतयो जित वास. विदेशया वास जुल थनिआव राम राम ॥ १ ॥
३. हथुजन भया पापं मडेना गुसोय धुनो ॥ पन्जलस चोना मदुथे जिडोन राम राम ॥ २ ॥
४. नवदुर्गा गणेश्याके सहश्रजि विनती याना ॥ लषलपि अपराध छेमायाओ राम राम ॥ ३ ॥
५. ल्हाय गोम्हयाके जिन दुषया वेदना: थुगु पासा फेनिओ सुना न राम राम ॥ ४ ॥
६. पिरतीयाना वचोन छलयात दुरजनन ॥ हाय हाय छु नुगल जुल राम राम ॥ ५ ॥
७. सूर्यवसि कुलमनि श्री रणजित मल्ल ॥ तलेजुन विल बैकुंठवास राम राम ॥ ६ ॥

नेपाली अनुवाद (Nepali Translation)

१. हे राम ! हे राम ! म यो नेपाल (लाई) नसम्झिईकन कसरी रहन सकूँला !
शत्रु-दुर्जनले मलाई अब सिद्यायो -खत्तम पाऱ्यो) !! ॥ *
२. १२ हजारको (१२ हजार घर भएको) राज्यमा मेरो वास अब सकियो !
अवदेखि विदेशको वास भयो ! हे राम ! हे राम !! १ ॥
३. पूर्वजन्मको पापले नसुनेको (पनि) देखि सकें,
पिंजडामा बसी बाँच्नुको प्रयोजन छैन राम ! राम !! २ ॥
४. नवदुर्गा र गणेशलाई सहस्र विन्ति गर्छु,
मैले गरेका अपराधका निम्ति क्षमा गर (भनेर) राम ! राम !! (३)

* रागको मूल बोल वा शीर्षक श्लोक जुन राग गाउने समयमा हरेक श्लोक पछि फेरी दोहोर्‍याउँदै गाइन्छ ।

५. दुःखको वेदना म कति (जना) सँग (मात्र) कहूँ ?

यो पासोबाट मलाई कसैले फुकाउन सक्दैन राम ! राम !! ॥ ४ ॥

६. माया-प्रीति गरिबसी छल गन्यो दुर्जजनले,

हाय ! हाय ! (मेरो) के सोचाईले गर्दा यस्तो भयो⁺ राम ! राम !! ॥५ ॥

७. सूर्यवंशको कूलमणि जस्तो रणजित मल्ललाई

तलेजुले वैकुण्ठवास गरायो राम ! राम !! ॥ ६ ॥

⁺ मैले कस्तो सोचाइले गर्दा त्यस्तो शत्रुको छल बुझ्न सकिन र आखिर यस्तो भयो भन्ने अर्थ यसको हुन्छ ।

अष्टमातृका नृत्यमा भैरवको महत्त्व र कीर्तिपुरको बाघभैरव नृत्य

प्रयागमान प्रधान

मातृकाको परिचय र विकास

विश्वका विभिन्न मानव समाजमा आ-आफ्नै धार्मिक सांस्कृतिक परम्परा रहेका छन् । मानवले सर्वप्रथम प्राकृतिक शक्तिलाई पूजा अर्चना गर्न थालेको कुरा प्रायः सबै सभ्यताका केन्द्रबाट थाहा हुन्छ । यसै क्रममा मातृशक्तिको उपासना गर्ने प्रथाको विकास भएको देखिन्छ ।

ऋग्वेदमा स्वर्ग लोकमा सूर्य, अन्तरिक्ष लोकमा इन्द्र र भूलोकमा अग्नि देवताका साथ साथै मातृशक्तिको पनि पूजाअर्चना, होम-यज्ञ गरिएको गरिएको वर्णन पाइन्छ । ऋग्वेदका उषा सूक्त र गायत्री सूक्तमा मातृदेवीको आराधनाका उदाहरण पाइन्छन् (जोशी २०३०:१८८) । कतिपय वैदिक सूक्तहरूमा (१) सप्तमातर (२) सप्तरश्मि (३) सप्तजिह्वा तथा (४) दशबाहु भएकी देवीको वर्णन पाइन्छ । उपनिषद कालका त्रिशक्ति वा त्रिमातृकाहरू सरस्वती, लक्ष्मी र रूद्राणी क्रमशः ब्रह्मा, विष्णु महेश्वरका तीन शक्तिका रूपमा मानिएका छन् । पछिका समयमा माहेश्वरी, कौमारी, बाराही र काली (चामुण्डा) थपेर सप्तमातृका र त्यसपछि फेरि महालक्ष्मी थपी लोकप्रिय अष्टमातृकाहरू देखा परे भने पछि, नवदुर्गा तथा दशमहाविद्या आदि मातृशक्तिले समेत स्थान पाउँदै गएका छन् । यी अष्टमातृकाहरू काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाका विभिन्न स्थानमा स्थापना गरिएका छन् भने नामहरू पनि स्थानीय रूपमा नै सम्बोधन गरिएका छन्, जस्तै ब्रह्मायणीलाई 'पासिक्व अजिमा', वैष्णवीलाई 'नैअजिमा', माहेश्वरीलाई 'लुमधि अजिमा', कौमारीलाई 'फिक्व अजिमा', बाराहीलाई 'कंग अजिमा', इन्द्रायणीलाई 'लुतीमरु अजिमा', चामुण्डा (काली)लाई 'थंबही अजिमा', महालक्ष्मीलाई 'चन्द्रलख अजिमा' इत्यादि । त्यसै गरी मातृकाहरूलाई पहाडतिर बूढीबज्यै, सुदूर पश्चिमतिर भुवानी या मालिका, पूर्वतिर माई भनी सम्बोधन गर्ने गरिन्छ । मातृशक्तिको अत्यधिक प्रचार एवं लोकप्रियता महाभारत र पुराणकालमा बढेको देखिन्छ । ब्रह्माण्डपुराणमा शक्तिलाई तीनै लोककी जननी भनिएको छ (जोशी, २०३०:१८९) । त्यस्तै कृष्णको परामर्शअनुसार अर्जुनले दुर्गाको स्तुति गरी युद्धमा विजयी हुनलाई प्रार्थना गरेको कुरा महाभारत (भीष्मपर्व, अध्याय २३) मा पाइन्छ । सात संख्याका मातृदेवीको समूह सप्तमातृकाले महाभारत पुराणकालदेखि स्पष्ट रूपमा लोकप्रियता पाउँदै आएको देखिन्छ । पुराण एवं परवर्तीकालका तन्त्र-ग्रन्थका आधारमा ब्रह्मायणी, रूद्राणी, वैष्णवी, कौमारी, चामुण्डा, बाराही र इन्द्रायणी आदि सप्तमातृकाका रूपमा प्रसिद्ध रहँदै आएको पाइन्छ (अवस्थी, १९६६:९९-१०२) ।

पौराणिक ग्रन्थहरूमा मातृकाहरूको उत्पत्तिको कथाहरू पाइन्छन् । मत्स्यपुराण अनुसार रूद्र स्वरूपका शिवले अन्धकासुरसितको युद्धमा अन्धकासुरलाई मार्न मातृकाहरूको उद्भव गराए-दास, १९८१:४-५) । ती मातृकाहरूले अन्धकासुरलाई

वध गरे । दानव वध गर्ने शक्तिका रूपमा सप्तमातृकाको सृष्टि भएको भन्ने कथा देवीमहात्म्य, मार्कण्डेय पुराण आदि ग्रन्थमा पनि पाइन्छ । शुम्भ र निशुम्भ नामका दानवबाट पीडित भएका देवगणले स्तुति गरेका कारण देवी पार्वतीको शरीरबाट अम्बिका उत्पन्न भइन् । तिनी पार्वतीको शरीरको कोषबाट उत्पन्न भएकी हुनाले “कौशिकी” भनी सम्बोधन गरिइन् । युद्धताका शुम्भ र निशुम्भले तिनमाथि आक्रमण गर्न खोज्दा क्रोधले तिनको ललाट कृष्णवर्णको हुन गयो र तिनको नाम कालिका रहन गयो । नरमुण्डमाला र व्याघ्रचर्म धारण गरी, हातमा खट्वांग लिएर चण्ड मुण्ड नाम गरेका दैत्यहरूको वध गरे पछि तिनको नाम “चामुण्डा” रहन गयो(श्रेष्ठ, २०६०:६) । सप्तमातृका स्वरूप ब्रह्मी, माहेश्वरी, कौमारी, वैष्णवी, वाराही, नारसिंही एवं इन्द्रायणी आदि क्रमशः ब्रह्मा, महेश्वर, कुमार, विष्णु, वाराह, नरसिंह एवं इन्द्रका शक्तिका रूपमा स्थापित हुन पुगे (मार्कण्डेयपुराण, अध्याय ८२) ।

वंशावली अनुसार कलिंगत सम्वत् ३८२५ मा गुणकामदेवले कान्तिपुर शहर बसाइसकेपछि देश रक्षा गर्न भनी क्रमशः भद्रकाली, नीलसरस्वती (उग्रतारा), रक्तकाली तथा श्वेतकालीको स्थापना गरेका थिए (योगी नरहरिनाथ, २०१२:६३-६६) । त्यस्तै कान्तिपुर शहरलाई खड्गाकृतिमा बसाई सकेपछि देशको रक्षा गर्न अष्टभैरव र अष्टमातृकाको स्थापना गर्ने संस्थापक राजाको रूपमा पनि यिनको उल्लेख गरिएको पाइन्छ (राजभण्डारी: २०४६) ।

पुरातात्विक प्रमाणका आधारमा भारतलगायत नेपालका विभिन्न क्षेत्रमा अनेक स्वरूपका मातृदेवीका प्राचीन मूर्तिहरू पाइएका छन् । देवीका यस्ता मूर्तिहरूमा ललितपुर च्यासलहिटीको गजलक्ष्मी मूर्ति प्राचीनतम देखिन्छ । यसलाई लैनसिंह बाडदेलेले आफ्नो पुस्तकमा ई. को दोस्रो शताब्दीको भनि उल्लेख गर्नु भएको छ (वाडदेले, १९८२:१७) । हरिराम जोशीले चाहिँ ई.पू. पहिलो शताब्दीको मान्नु भएको छ (जोशी, १९९८:१३०) । काठमाण्डौंको हाँडीगाउँको अर्को महत्वपूर्ण मूर्ति लक्ष्मी वा वैष्णवीको मूर्ति हो । यसलाई वाडदेलेले दोश्रो शताब्दीको मान्नु भएको छ (वाडदेले, १९८२:१९) । अन्य मातृकाका मूर्तिहरूमा ललितपुरको हौगलबहालको मातृका मूर्ति र कोटालटोल हाँडीगाउँको मातृका मूर्ति महत्वका छन् जो क्रमशः ईसाको दोश्रो र तेश्रो शताब्दीका मानिन्छन् । त्यसै गरी हाँडीगाउँकै महिषमर्दिनी र बालाजुकी हारीति जस्ता विविध स्वरूपका मातृशक्तिका मूर्तिहरू पाइएका छन् । चाँगुनारायणका सप्तमातृकाका मूर्ति (कौमारी, ब्रह्मायणी, माहेश्वरी र वाराही) ईसाको दोश्रो शताब्दीको अन्तिम चरण, बंगलामुखीका सप्तमातृका (यहाँ फेला परेका ६ वटा मूर्तिहरू मध्ये वाराही, ब्रह्मायणीको मूर्ति मात्र खुट्याउन सकिएको छ), बल्बुका सप्तमातृका मूर्ति कौमारी, वैष्णवी र वाराही, कीर्तिपुर बाघभैरव मन्दिर परिसर स्थित गणेश मन्दिरका वैष्णवी, ब्रह्मायणी, कौमारी, माहेश्वरी, वाराहीका मूर्तिहरू ईसाको दोश्रो-तेश्रो शताब्दीका मानिएका छन् । जयवागीश्वरीका कौमारी, माहेश्वरी, वैष्णवी ईसाको छैठौँ शताब्दी ताकाका मानिएका छन् । मालिगाउँको कौमारी, ललितपुरको सुबहालहिटीको वैष्णवी तथा हाँडीगाउँ नजिकै टुङ्गलदेवीको मन्दिरमा प्राप्त माहेश्वरी र कौमारीका मूर्ति ईसाको चौथो शताब्दीका मानिन्छन् । कमलादी गणेशस्थानका वैष्णवी, वाराही,

कौमारी र माहेश्वरीका मूर्तिहरू ईसाको पाँचौं शताब्दीका मानिन्छन् । महाबौद्ध र चावहिल गणेश मन्दिरका मातृकाहरू ईसाको पाँचौं-छैठौं शताब्दीका मानिएका छन् । एकै समूहमा रहने गरी प्राचीन परम्परागत मान्यता अनुरूप निर्मित भए तापनि फेला परेका यस्ता मूर्तिहरू एकै स्थानमा कतै पनि पूर्ण संख्यामा भने देखा परेका छैनन् । बाङ्गदेलका अनुसार “त्यस युगका सप्तमातृकाका सातवटै मूर्तिको एउटै ठाउँमा स्थापना भए तापनि आज समयको प्रभावले ती मूर्तिहरू छरिएर कुनै कता पुगे, कुनै त्यहीं अलपत्र परिरहेका छन् । यसबाट प्राचीनकालदेखि नै सप्तमातृकाको व्यापक प्रचार एवं लोकप्रियता रहेको आधार प्राप्त हुन्छ” (बाङ्गदेल, २०३९:४५-५९) र ईसाको प्रारम्भिक शताब्दीदेखि नै उपत्यकाको लौकिक जीवनमा मातृशक्तिका अनेक स्वरूपका मूर्तिको पूजा आराधना गर्ने व्यापक चलन रहेको तथ्य प्रमाणित हुन आउँछ ।

यसरी प्राचीनकालमा उपत्यकाका वासिन्दाहरूद्वारा आ-आफ्ना टोलइलाकामा सप्तमातृकाका मूर्ति बनाई पूजा अर्चना गरिन्थ्यो भने यस किसिमको प्रचलन ईसाको प्रारम्भदेखि छैठौं शताब्दीसम्म खूब चलेको आभास पाइन्छ । तर मध्यकालमा आइपुग्दा तान्त्रिक धर्मको बढ्दो लोकप्रियताका साथै अष्टमातृका, नवदुर्गादे जन्तुजीवनमा पहिले भन्दा बढी प्रभाव पार्न थालेको र यस युगमा जीवित देवीदेवताको लोकप्रियता बढ्न गएको थियो । फलस्वरूप सप्तमातृकाको मूर्ति बनाई पूजागर्ने चलनमा शिथिलता आउन पुगेको देखिन्छ (श्रेष्ठ, २०६०:७) ।

अष्टमातृका नृत्यको ऐतिहासिकता

माथि उल्लेखित विभिन्न मूर्तिहरूभन्दा सिन्धुघाटि उत्खननमा प्राप्त मातृदेवीका मूर्तिहरू अति प्राचीन तथा विशेष महत्त्वका रहेका छन् भने लुम्बिनी वनजरहीको उत्खननमा फेला परेका मातृकादेवीका मूर्ति ईशापूर्व तेस्रो शताब्दीका मानिएका छन् । सभ्यता र समृद्धिका स्वरूप मूर्तिको निर्माण विकास कै क्रममा माटोबाट ढुङ्गा, काठ र धातुहरूमा विकसित हुँदै गए (जोशी, २०३२:१०-११) । काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा मध्यकालमा हिन्दू तथा बौद्ध परम्परामा तान्त्रिक विद्याको प्रभाव बढ्दै गयो । ई.को आठौँदेखि बाह्रौँ शताब्दीतिर तान्त्रिकहरूको विशेष चलखेल रहेको थियो । त्यस ताका तान्त्रिकहरू मानव शरीरमा क्रियात्मक प्रयोग गर्थे (श्रेष्ठ, २०६०:२२) । माटो, काठ, ढुङ्गा, धातु आदि वस्तुबाट निर्मित मूर्तिहरूमा त देवताको प्राण प्रतिष्ठा गरी देवत्व चढाउन सकिन्छ भने साक्षत जीवन्त स्वरूप मानिसमा पनि देवत्व स्थापित गर्न सकिन्छ भन्ने प्रयोगात्मक पद्धतिको शुरुवात तात्कालिक सिद्धहरूले गरे । भक्तिधारामा नृत्यको महत्त्व भएकोले भक्तिमा नृत्यको व्यवस्था गरिएको छ । देवीप्रति समर्पित भई पूजा आराधना गर्दै उनकै अनुकरण गर्न खोज्ने प्रवृत्तिले पनि नृत्य अभिनयको विकास भएको हुन सक्छ (वज्राचार्य र श्रेष्ठ, २०३२:११३) ।

विभिन्न पुराण तथा ग्रन्थहरूमा यस्ता देवीदेवताको परिकल्पना र महिमा वर्णन पाइन्छन् । केही नृत्यहरू तान्त्रिक साधनामा आधारित प्रतीत हुन्छन् । यसै कोटिमा पर्ने विभिन्न मातृका नृत्य-नाटकहरू मञ्चन हुँदै आएको पनि पाइन्छ । तान्त्रिक विधि अनुसार देवीदेवताको मूलरूपमा “कलश”मा साधना गर्ने चलन रहेको छ । “रातो

मच्छेन्द्रनाथ” कामरूपबाट “कलश”मा राखेर नेपाल ल्याइएको, हरिसिंह देवले सिमरौनगढबाट “तुलजा भवानी” पनि “कलश”मा ल्याएको भन्ने कथा र किम्वदन्ती छंदैछ । नेपाल अधिराज्यका विभिन्न क्षेत्रमा संचालन हुँदै आइरहेका विभिन्न मातृकागणका नृत्यहरू पनि मूल देउताको रूपमा “कलश”मा नै साधना गरी तान्त्रिक विधिविधान अनुसार चलेका पाइन्छन् ।

अष्टमातृका नृत्यहरू विशेषतः हिन्दू धर्मको शाक्त परम्परामा आधारित छन् । तथापि यिनमा बौद्ध तान्त्रिक सिद्धान्तहरूको प्रभाव देखिन्छ । यी नृत्यमा प्रस्तुत हुने कथावस्तु र हाउभाउहरू मार्कण्डेय पुराण, देवी भागवत, देवी महात्म्य जस्ता पुराण र अन्य प्राचीन ग्रन्थहरूमा उल्लेख गरिएका उपाख्यानहरूमा आधारित देखिन्छन् । काठमाडौं उपत्यकामा नचाइने विभिन्न ठाउँका अष्टमातृका नृत्यहरू मध्ये हरिसिद्धिको त्रिशक्ति नृत्य अति प्राचीन मानिन्छ । तर कहिले देखि यसको थालनी भयो भनेर यकीन गर्न नसकिए पनि मध्यकालको प्रतीत हुन्छ ।

“...अघि वीरविक्रमादित्य राजाको पालामा श्रीउग्रतारा नीलसरस्वती प्रसन्न भइ राजालाई आज्ञा गरि मेरा एक नाटक प्रख्यात गर भनी आज्ञा हुंदा वीरविक्रमादित्य राजाले हरिसिद्धि पुराण प्रमाणमाथि आफ्नु यश प्रख्यात निमित्त तीन तला छत्र शिरमा राखी आफ्ना नामले मकुण्डो बनाई चौदिका राजाकन जित्याको भावगरी राजा र सिद्धमन्त्रीका मुख बनाई नृत्य विधान बनाया”

भनि भाषावंशावलीमा उल्लेख भएको छ । हरिसिद्धि नृत्यको सम्बन्ध पशुपति, भीमेश्वर र ज्ञानेश्वर जस्ता देवताहरूसंग रहेको मानिन्छ । सोही वंशावलीमा उल्लेख भए अनुसार लोप भैरहेको सो नृत्य कालान्तरमा

“रत्नमल्लका छोरा अमर मल्लले नाचको ठूलो सम्मान गरी जगाई कान्तिपुरमा नचाई नृत्यलीला गराया । हरिसिद्ध नाचका (हात्ती) दोषले अन्न घटाया भनी सहकाल निमित्त खोकनाका रूद्रायणी देवीका नृत्य लीला बनाई नृत्य गराया । हरिचोकदेवीका नृत्य बनाइ चलाया । फेरी मनमयजु इन्द्रायणीका नृत्यमा त्रिशक्ति सहित गरी नृत्यलीला बनाई चलाया । फेरी पंचली भैरवका नृत्य दुर्गासहित गरि नृत्यलीला बनाई चलाया । फेरी कंकेश्वरी कालीदेवीका नृत्य आवरण गणसहित गरि चलाया । फेरी लुमडीमाई महाकालीका नृत्य आवरण गणसहित गरि चलाया । फेरी कान्तिपुर सहर भित्रका नाचमा श्वेतकाली, वाराही, भैरव, चण्डेरी प्रमुख गरी चण्डासुर दैत्य बधका लीला गरि गणावरण सहित नृत्य चलाया...” (लम्साल (स), २०२३:५५) ।

यसै गरी उक्त वंशावलीमा

“भाइसित विरोधभाव गरी भक्तपुर वनेपुर २ देशको भोग गरि बस्यामा कान्तिपुरका राजाले अनेक देवीगणका यात्रा नाचवनाई वर्ष प्रति गन्या

रीत चलाया भन्त्या सुनी गुणी जन द्वारा नवदुर्गा गणमा अनेक विधान प्रमाण गरि नाच प्रारम्भ गराया । फेरी बोडेमा पनि महालक्ष्मी देवीको बडा नेम गरी नाच प्रारम्भ गराया” (उही, २०२३:५३)

भनि उल्लेख गरिएको छ । यसरी कान्तिपुर पछि भक्तपुरमा पनि गण नृत्यको प्रारम्भ भएको पाइन्छ भने ‘मणिमय रत्नमाला वंशावली’ मा उल्लेख भए बमोजिम यस प्रकारको मातृका तथा भैरवको गण नृत्य ललितपुरमा राजा सिद्धिनरसिंह मल्लका छोरा श्रीनिवास मल्लद्वारा थालनी गरिएको थियो । उक्त वंशावलीका अनुसार राजा (श्रीनिवास मल्ल)ले एकपल्ट सपनामा आफ्नो मूलचोकमा आठ मातृका र भैरवको गण श्वेत गणेश, कुमार, सिंहिनी, व्याघ्रिनी, ख्याक र कंकालीसहित नाची रहेका देखे । निद्राबाट विउँभेर गावहाल टोलका आफ्ना गुरु ब्राह्मण मधुसुदनलाई बोलाई सपनामा देखेको वृत्तान्त अनुसारको नृत्य बनाई नचाउने इच्छा व्यक्त गरे । यो व्यवस्थाका लागि ललितपुर न्याखाचुकका तान्त्रिकाचार्य कृत्वापादसँग सल्लाह गरी सपना देखे अनुसार भैरव मातृका देव देवीको वर्णन सहितको चचा(गीत) बाजा, ताल मिलाइ दशैँताका प्रदर्शन समेत गरिएको उल्लेख पाइन्छ (पं.वै.वज्राचार्य, २०३९:२) ।

भैरवको परिचय र अष्टमातृकासँग यसको सम्बन्ध

पुराण तथा आगमशास्त्रहरूले भैरवलाई भगवान शङ्करको ज्योतिर्मय विराटावतारका रूपमा सम्बोधन गरेकाछन् । संस्कृतको “भी” धातुबाट बनेको “भैरव” शब्दको अर्थ हो “डरलाग्दो” । भैरवको स्वरूप जति डरलाग्दो छ, त्यति नै सुन्दर पनि छ, डरलाग्दोपन र सुन्दरताको सम्मिश्रण नै भैरव अवतारको खास पहिचान हो । पशुपति पछि नाथ जोडे र जसरी पशुपतिनाथ भन्ने गरिन्छ, त्यसरी नै ‘भैरव’ को पछि ‘नाथ’ जोडे ‘भैरवनाथ’ भन्ने गरिन्छ ।

शैव धर्मका विभिन्न सम्प्रदायहरू मध्ये पाशुपत सम्प्रदायका उपसम्प्रदायहरू- मुण्डशृङ्खलिक, शृङ्खलिक, दानवश, लकुलीश, सोमसिद्धान्त, माहेश्वर, वीरशैव, मिश्रशैव, शिवसिद्धान्त आदि र बौद्ध धर्मका महायान र वज्रयानीहरू शिवलाई मुण्डमालाधारी महादेव वा भैरवको रूपमा उपासना गर्दथे (रेग्मी, २०३९:१४-४६) । भैरवनाथ शिवको दक्षिणमुख अघोरसँग गाँसिएका शास्त्रीय मान्यताहरू रहेको र अघोर मुखको अर्को नाम “भैरव” हो (चालिसे, २००४:९०) । वज्रयानीहरूले महाकाललाई उग्र तान्त्रिक देवताको रूपमा वज्रभैरवको परिकल्पना गरे । शिवदेवको सम्वत् १२२ को गोरखाको अभिलेखमा वज्रभैरवको पूजा व्यवस्था सम्बन्धी उल्लेख पाइन्छ (वज्राचार्य, २०३०:५२३) । ‘प्रबोध चन्द्रोदय’ नाटक अनुसार कापालिकहरू शिवलाई महाभैरवको रूपमा पूजा गर्दछन् । महाभैरवको स्वरूप अत्यन्त भयंकर हुन्छ (भा, १९७०:१८४) । शिवको उग्ररूप भैरव महाकालको सबभन्दा पहिलो उल्लेख विष्णु धर्मोत्तर पुराणमा आएको छ । महाकाल र भैरव दुवै कालो वर्णका हुन्छन् । मत्स्यपुराणमा उल्लेखित कथाअनुसार शिवले पार्वतीलाई काली भनेकाले पार्वतीले ‘तिमी भूतकालो महाकाल होऊ’ भनी शिवलाई भनेको पाइन्छ (पाल, १९७४:१००-१०१) । पुराणकालमा आएर वैदिक रूद्रको उग्ररूप शिवको सौम्य रूपको विकास हुने

क्रममा उग्ररुद्रको कल्पनामा शिथिलता देखा परे पनि लुप्त भने हुन सकेन । वेदोत्तर कालमा जव त्रिमूर्तिको कल्पना भयो अनि शिवलाई विश्वको संहारक बनाउन थालियो । रामायण महाभारत कालमा यो कुरा त्यति प्रष्ट थिएन परन्तु पुराणहरूमा यसको खुलेर वर्णन भएको छ । उग्ररूपमा शिवलाई एक क्रूर, भयावह र महाविनाशकारी देवता मान्न थालियो । यसै रूपमा उनलाई “चण्ड”र “महाकाल” भैरव इत्यादि उपाधिहरू दिन थालियो (यदुवंशी, १९५५:१११) ।

अग्नि पुराणमा भैरवको वर्णन उल्लेख गर्दै भनिएकोछ, भैरवको भयङ्कर रूप हुन्छ, उनको शिरमा अर्द्ध चन्द्र र लट्ठा परेको केश हुन्छ । उनका शस्त्रहरू तरवार, बाण, छुरी, धनु, त्रिशूल, डोरी(पाश) इत्यादि हुन् । कुनै कुनै समयमा उनले हात्तीको चर्म लगाएको हुन्छ । साथै यसमा उनका पाँच अनुहार भएको वर्णन पनि पाइन्छ । सर्पहरू उनका गहना हुन् (अग्निपुराण, अध्याय ५२-८० । यी कुराहरूमा मध्यनजर राख्ने हो भने महादेव र भैरवमा समानताहरू पाइन्छन् । जस्तै जट्टा, सर्पको गहना, कालो वर्ण, शिरमा चन्द्र, हातमा त्रिशूल आदि ।

श्रीमद्भागवत तृतीय स्कन्धको वाह्वी अध्यायमा भैरवको वर्णन गरिएको छ । त्यहाँ भैरवलाई ब्रह्माजीले मिथ्या बोलेको र निन्दा गरेकाले क्रुद्ध भएका शिवका भृकुटीबाट उद्भव भएका ‘आदि पुरुष’ बताइएको छ । साथै एकादश रूद्रलाई पनि शिवको क्रोध रूप भनेर वर्णन गरिएको छ (आचार्य, २०३९:४) । भैरवतन्त्रको विद्यारण्यकृत एक टीकामा भैरव सम्प्रदायको उल्लेख पाइन्छ (यदुवंशी, पूर्ववत् टिप्पणी:१५६) । भैरव वारे एउटा रोचक पौराणिक कथा छ । एक पटक ब्रह्मा र विष्णु शिवको अनुपस्थितिमा त्रिदेवमध्ये को ठूलो भन्ने सम्बन्धमा विवाद चल्यो । उनीहरू एक आपसमा घमण्डले फुले, अभिमानको आवेगमा आई ब्रह्माले शिवको अनादर गरे । यसै अवसरमा त्यहाँ यस तिरष्कारबाट क्रोधित भएका शिव देखा परे । भनिन्छ कि उनको क्रोधबाट अग्निको ज्वाला निस्क्यो, जुन कालरूप भैरव भएर देखा पर्‍यो (लिङ्गपुराण: १-९०) । भैरव रूपको उत्पत्ति हुनासाथ उनले ब्रह्मा माथि हमला गरे र उनका धेरै टाउका मध्ये त्यसलाई निमोठे जसले शिवको अनादर गरेथे । फलस्वरूप ब्रह्म हत्याको पाप उनको थाप्लोमा पर्‍यो । शिवको आदेश अनुसार यस पापको प्रायश्चित्तका निमित्त हातमा ब्रह्माको छुट्टयाइएको टाउको लिई भैरवले एउटा अनिश्चित यात्रा शुरु गरे । भैरवले धेरै पवित्र स्थलहरूको भ्रमण गरे तथापि ब्रह्महत्याको पापबाट आफूलाई मुक्त गर्न सकेनन् । अन्तमा वाराणसी पुगेर आफूले बोकेको ब्रह्माको शिर त्यहीं विसर्जन गरे । तत्पश्चात उक्त ठाउँ कपालमोचन तीर्थको नामले प्रख्यात भयो (शिव पुराण, सतरूद्र संहिता) ।

माथि वर्णन भएका प्रत्येक अष्टमातृका नृत्यमा भैरव पनि अनिवार्य रूपमा सम्मिलित रहेका हुन्छन् । अन्य पुरुष देवताहरू धेरै हुँदा हुँदै भैरव नै अनिवार्य रूपमा किन सम्मिलित गरिए भन्ने वारे प्रश्न उठ्नु पनि स्वाभाविकै हुन्छ । तसर्थ अष्टमातृकासँग भैरवको तादात्म्य के हो ? यस सम्बन्धमा वर्णन तथा विश्लेषण हुनु पनि जरुरी देखिन्छ । हामी भैरवलाई कहीं क्षेत्रपालको रूपमा, कहीं शिव मन्दिरको द्वारपालको रूपमा र कहीं शक्ति पीठहरूसँग सम्बन्धित रहेको पाउँछौं । शिवको भैरव

रूपमा शक्ति पीठसँग सम्बन्धित भएको सम्बन्धमा यहाँ एउटा कथा प्रस्तुत गर्नु प्रासंगिक होला । स्वस्थानी कथाअनुसार दक्षप्रजापतिकी छोरी सतीदेवी शिवकी प्रथम पत्नी थिइन् । आफ्ना पिता दक्षप्रजापतिले आयोजना गरेको यज्ञमा विनानिमन्त्रण नजानू भनी पतिले भन्दाभन्दै पनि सतीदेवी गइन् । त्यहाँ आफ्ना पतिको निन्दा सुनेर असह्य भई तिनले यज्ञको अग्निकण्डमा फाल हाली प्राण त्यागिन् । यो घटना थाहा पाएर शिव दक्षको यज्ञस्थलमा गई दक्ष र उनको यज्ञ ध्वंस गरे । त्यस पछि शिव आफ्नी प्रिय पत्नीको लास काँधमा बोकी उद्देश्यविहीन यत्रतत्र घुमी हिँड्न थाले । विष्णुले यो थाहा पाई शिवलाई यस दुःखबाट मुक्त गर्न उनको चकले सतीको शरीर काटेर शरीरका अंगहरू विभिन्न ठाउँमा पतन गराइदिएका थिए । जहाँ जहाँ सतीका अंगहरू पतन भए ती ठाउँहरू शक्ति पीठ भए । शिवको आफ्नी पत्नीसँग यति प्रेम थियो कि उनी भैरवको रूप लिएर पत्नीका अंगहरूको रक्षा गर्न नजिकको ठाउँमा स्थिर भएर रहे (बनर्जी:१९७४) । सतीदेवीका पीठसँग भैरवको सम्बन्ध रहेको कुरा स्वस्थानी कथाको दशौं अध्यायमा दर्शाइएको छ (शर्मा, १९४७:१५७) ।

शिवको संहारक तथा भयानक रूप अन्तर्गत श्मशान भैरव, वीरभद्र, कामान्तक तथा त्रिपुरान्तक भैरवका चौंसठ्ठी रूपहरू विभिन्न नामले सम्बोधित भएका छन् (द्विवेदी, २०३८:४) । ईशाको पाँचौं शताब्दीको प्रारम्भदेखिने भारतमा तन्त्रवाद देखा पर्दैआएको थियो । सन् ४३३ को गान्धार अभिलेखमा तन्त्र शब्दको उल्लेख भएको छ । यो धारणा शक्ति अथवा मातृदेवी उपासनाको सम्प्रदायसित सम्बन्धित थियो, शक्ति पीठहरूको धारणा भने ईशाको सातौं शताब्दीतिर प्रवेश भएको थियो, जसमा चौंसठ्ठी भैरवहरू सहित चौंसठ्ठी योगिनीहरूको अवधारणा र तिनीहरूका शक्तिको रूप विकसित भयो (श्रेष्ठ, २०४९) । चौंसठ्ठी भैरवहरू वारे आगम ग्रन्थहरूमा उल्लेख भएको पाइन्छ । चौंसठ्ठी भैरवलाई आठ-आठ भैरवहरूको छुट्टाछुट्टै समूह गरी आठ समूहमा विभक्त गरिएको छ । यी समूहका नायकहरू क्रमशः असितांग, रुरु, चण्ड, क्रोध, उन्मत्त, कपाल, भीषण र संहार भएको कुरा उल्लेख भएको छ । यी समूहलाई अष्ट भैरव भनिन्छ । यिनीहरू तान्त्रिक ग्रन्थहरूमा उल्लेख भएका चौंसठ्ठी योगिनीका पतिहरू अर्थात् संरक्षक भएको कुरा त्यसैमा उल्लेख भएको पाइन्छ (बनर्जी, १९७४:४६५) । यसरी चौंसठ्ठी भैरवहरू आठ समूहको प्रतिनिधित्व गर्ने अष्टभैरवको नाममा समाहित पाइएको छ भने चौंसठ्ठी योगिनीहरूलाई पनि आठवटी योगिनीमा समाहित स्वरूप अष्टमातृकाका रूपमा मानिएको छ । अष्टमातृका समूहमा पर्ने देवीहरू शास्त्रोक्त क्रमले यसप्रकार छन् : (१) ब्राह्मी वा ब्रह्माणी (२) रौद्री, रूद्राणी वा माहेश्वरी (३) कौमारी (४) वैष्णवी वा नारायणी (५) वाराही (६) ऐन्द्री वा इन्द्रायणी (७) चामुण्डा वा काली र (८) महालक्ष्मी । दुर्गाहोमविधि अनुसार अष्टमातृका समूहकी प्रत्येक देवीसित अष्टभैरव समूहका एक एक भैरव रहन्छन् । यस हिसाबले ब्रह्माणीसित असितांगभैरव, रूद्राणीसित रुरुभैरव, कौमारीसित चण्डभैरव, वैष्णवीसित क्रोधभैरव, वाराहीसित उन्मत्तभैरव, इन्द्रायणीसित कपालभैरव, कालीसित भीषणभैरव तथा महालक्ष्मीसित संहारभैरव रहन्छन् । देवीसित भैरव बसेका मनोरम कलाकृति मल्लकालीन मन्दिरहरूका टुँडालमा सजिलैसित देख्न

पाइन्छ (वेदनाथ रेग्मी, २०४६) । तर मुसाशी ताचीकावाद्वारा प्रस्तुत पुस्तक (ताचीकावा, २००४) र रेग्मीको उक्त लेखनमा केही फरक पाइएको छ । संहारभैरवको वर्ण कृष्णवर्ण जस्तो भए तापनि अष्टमातृकाका नृत्यहरूमा यिनको मुखाकृति(मुकुण्डो) परम्परागत रूपले गाढा नीलो रंगमा प्रस्तुत गरिएको पाइन्छ । तसर्थ यी नृत्यहरूमा संहारभैरवले अष्टभैरव समूहको प्रतिनिधित्व गरेको स्पष्ट हुन आउँछ । ईश्वर भनेको प्रकृति शक्ति र पुरुष शक्ति गरी दुई शक्तिको संयुक्त दर्शन मानिन्छ । हिन्दू दर्शनअनुसार प्रकृति शक्ति पार्वती र पुरुष शक्ति महादेव हो । यही पार्वती र महादेवको लीला शक्तिको अभिव्यक्ति हो अष्टमातृका नृत्य-नाटक अर्थात् महादेव-पार्वतीको अन्तर्निहित शक्तिस्वरूप प्रदर्शन नै अष्टमातृका हुन् । महादेवको हिंस्रक अर्को रूप भैरव हो भने कैलासमा रहंदा द्वारपालका रूपमा रहने नन्दी र भृंगी यहाँ सिंहिनी र व्याघ्रिनी स्वरूपमा पाइन्छन् । तसर्थ जहाँ पार्वती त्यहाँ महादेव अर्थात् जहाँ शक्ति त्यहाँ शिवको उपस्थिति नै अष्टमातृका नृत्य-नाटकमा भैरवको संलग्नता हो । प्रत्येक अष्टमातृका नृत्यमा भैरवको अनिवार्य उपस्थिति किन रह्यो र अष्टमातृका र भैरवको बीच के सम्बन्ध रहेछ भन्ने बारे उपरोक्त विवरणद्वारा स्पष्ट गर्ने कोशिस गरिएको छ ।

अष्टमातृका नृत्यको ऐतिहासिकताको क्रममा बाघभैरव नृत्य

नेपालका विभिन्न स्थान जस्तै मकवानपुर, चित्लाङ्ग, द्वाल्खा र पोखरामा एक-एक वटा र काठमाडौं उपत्यका भित्र २६ गरी जम्मा ३० वटा मुकुण्डोधारी नृत्य-नाटकहरू सञ्चालन हुँदै आएका छन् । जस्ताई देवी नृत्य-नाटक, कार्तिक नृत्य-नाटक र अष्टमातृका नृत्य-नाटक गरी तीन भागमा विभाजन गर्न सकिन्छ । यी मध्ये बढी प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त नृत्य हो अष्टमातृकाको । नरदेवीको श्वेतकाली, वटुको भद्रकाली, ज्यावहालको पचली भैरव, हल्चोकको आकाश भैरव, ललितपुरको गौँ प्याखं, हरिसिद्धिको त्रिशक्ति, ठेचोको महालक्ष्मी, खोकनाको रुद्राणी, बोडेको नील बाराही, भक्तपुरको नवदुर्गा नृत्य आदि रहेका छन् भने कीर्तिपुरको बाघभैरव नृत्य पनि प्रसिद्ध नृत्य हो । यस बाघभैरव नृत्यमा निहित कथानक, तान्त्रिक विधान, प्रचलित मान्यता आदिका आधारमा भैरवसहित मातृका गणहरूमा ब्रह्मायणी, गंगा (माहेश्वरी), वैष्णवी, कौमारी, कालिका (चामुण्डा), बाराही र इन्द्रायणी रहेकाछन् भने गणेशको विशिष्ट भूमिकासहित प्रस्तुत हुने गर्दछ, द्वारपालकोरूपमा सिंहिनी र व्याघ्रिनी छन् । विशेष रूप र अवस्थामा प्रस्तुत हुने श्वेतभैरव रहेको छ । नृत्य गर्न नपर्ने तर सम्मानस्वरूप कथितिया महाद्यः भनेर उखुको छोक्राको मुद्रामा एउटा लट्टीमा महादेवको मुकुण्डो स्थापन गर्ने र यात्राको समयमा गणेशले दायौं हातमा लिने गरेको पाइन्छ । यस हिसाबले यस नृत्यमा जम्मा १३ वटा मुकुण्डो प्रदर्शनहुने गरेको पाइन्छ । यस नृत्य-नाटकको यात्रा सञ्चालनको हिसाबले मध्यकालमा यो नृत्य शुरु हुँदा नृत्यसँग सम्बन्धित पीठ, टोल र बस्तीको आपसी सम्बन्ध बारे ज्ञान दिलाएको देखिन्छ । त्यसैको निरन्तरता स्वरूप यो नृत्यको थालनीका लागि विभिन्न पीठ तथा स्थानबाट विधिवत् देवीदेवताको साधना गरी ल्याउने तथा नचाउने परिपाटी यद्यपि

प्रचलनमा रहिआएको छ । वडादशैंको विजयादशमीको दिनमा प्रथम पटक कीर्तिपुर इन्द्रायणीस्थानबाट यात्रा प्रारम्भ गरी “देय् चाःहिके” भनेर देश परिक्रमा गराउने चलन छ । साथै विभिन्न समयमा विभिन्न स्थानहरूमा “छ ख”, “बा ख”, “चा ख”, “न्हि ख” आदि गरी नृत्य नचाउने गरिआएको पाइन्छ । कीर्तिपुरका विभिन्न स्थानहरू लगायत कान्तिपुर, ललितपुर सम्भवत भक्तपुर दरवार क्षेत्र लाय्कू अर्थात् मल्लकालीन दरवार क्षेत्रमा नचाउने गरिआइएको छ । यसबाट मल्लकालमा राजनैतिक रूपमा राज्य छुट्टिएर वसेपनि सांस्कृतिक रूपमा उनीहरूमा समझदारी कायम रहेको प्रमाणित हुन्छ ।

यो नृत्य पनि नेवार समुदायका अन्य चाड पर्वहरू जस्तै प्रत्येक १२ वर्षमा गथाःम्बः चःढेवाट विधिवत् शुरुभई सिथिनखः अर्थात् जेष्ठ शुक्लपक्ष षष्ठी तिथिको पर्सि भलभलअष्टमीको दिनमा सीजा नकेगु (मृत्युवरण भात खाउने) कार्यबाट विधिवत समाप्त हुने गरेको छ । तर यो बाघभैरव नृत्यको शुरुवात कस्ले र कहिले गराएको भन्ने प्रामाणिक रूपमा थाहा पाउन सकिएको छैन । भाषावंशावलीमा उल्लेखित उपरोक्त नृत्य-नाटकवाहेकका बाघभैरव र महालक्ष्मी नृत्य पनि अमर मल्ल वा उनीपछिका कुनै राजाले शुरु गराएको हुनसक्ने अनुमान गरिएको छ (वेदनाथ रेग्मी, २०४३) । तर यो अनुमान कुनै वंशावली, अभिलेख वा अन्य कुनै प्रमाणमा आधारित नभएकाले यो नृत्य कहिले देखि थालनी भएको भन्ने कुरामा प्रश्न चिन्ह नै रहेको छ । यस लेखकलाई उपलब्ध केही प्रमाणका आधारमा ललितपुरका राजा श्रीनिवास मल्लद्वारा थालनी गराइएको हुन सक्ने अनुमान प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । राजा सिद्धिनरसिंह मल्लका छोरा श्रीनिवास मल्ल राजा बन्ने लालसामा विद्रोह गरी कीर्तिपुर बस्न आएका थिए । राजा हुनका लागि आवश्यक पर्ने एउटा राज्यमा हुनु पर्ने आवश्यक विभिन्न पूर्वाधार कीर्तिपुरमा बनाउन लगाएका थिए । सानै भएपनि राजदरवार क्षेत्र (लाय्कू) बन्यो । तलेजु मन्दिर पनि बनाउन लगाए । उमामहेश्वर बनाउने राउत विश्वनाथ बाबु पनि यिनै श्रीनिवास मल्लका सानी आमाका छोरा थिए । राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालयको इतिहास घटनावलीमा सिद्धिनरसिंह मल्लका ल्याइते पट्टिकी श्रीमतीबाट सन् १६२२ (ने.सं. ७४२ मार्ग) मा छोरा जन्मे भनी टिपिएको छ (श्रेष्ठ २५७:४९) । शायद यिनै विश्वनाथ त्यस दिन सिद्धिनरसिंह मल्लका ल्याइते श्रीमतीबाट जन्मेका छोरा थिए । श्रीनिवास मल्लका पालामा कीर्तिपुरमा धेरै कार्य भए । चीलत्रो धर्मधातु मण्डल बन्यो, इन्द्रायणीमा सिंह थपिए, तोरण तथा मन्दिर बन्यो । बाघभैरवमा काष्ठ तोरण बन्यो । लोँ देगः (प्रस्तर मन्दिर) बन्यो । यी कार्य हुँदा यिनी स्वयं उपस्थित थिए भन्ने उल्लेख पाइन्छ । उमामहेश्वर मन्दिरमा प्रस्तरका ठूला ठूला हात्ती थपिए । पञ्च बुद्ध बने । पद्मपाणी र तारा बने । भाजंगालमा मन्दिर बन्यो । श्रीनिवास मल्ल कीर्तिपुर छोडेर पाटन गए पछि पनि उनको कृपादृष्टि यहाँ परी नै रहेको थियो । यहाँको कोतघरमा ने.सं. ८०१ मा गजुर चढाइएको वंशावलीमा उल्लेख भएको छ (लम्साल, २०२३:७१) कोतघर एक शक्ति पीठ कै रूपमा रहेको छ । यहाँ दुर्गाभवानी लगायत भैरव सहित अष्टमातृका गणकै पूजा अर्चना हाल पनि हुँदै गरेको छ । यसै कोतघरमा बाघभैरव नृत्य सिकाउन शुरु

गरिने गथाः म्वः चढेको दिन बिहान ती नृत्यगुठीबाट पूजा गरेर आई एउटा हाँस छोडेर जानुपर्ने, कोतघरको तर्फबाट थकालीले एउटा हाँस सहित पूजागरी नृत्य सिकाउने बलः (छाप्रो)मा प्वाल पारी दिनुपर्ने, नृत्य निकालिने दिनमा कोतघरबाट भैरव र गणेश भई नृत्य गर्नेलाई पोशाक दिनु पर्ने, नृत्यको प्रसँगमा प्रथम देश परिक्रमाका दिन इन्द्रायणी पीठबाट पहिले सीधा कोतघरको पूजा तथा सगुन ग्रहण गर्नु पर्ने आदि कार्यबाट बाघभैरव नृत्य र यस कोतघरको बीच विभिन्न धार्मिक तथा सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध रहेको देखापर्दछ । साधारणतया मल्लकालमा कोतघर दरवार अन्तर्गत पथ्यो तसर्थ श्रीनिवास मल्ल ललितपुरमा राजा भए पछि सो कोतघर प्रधानहरूको मातहतमा आएको अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । यी प्रधानहरू पनि ललितपुरबाट सो कोतघर सञ्चालनका लागि ल्याइराखेका हुन् भनिन्छ (हाल ज्ञानकाजी प्रधान कोतघरको थकाली न्वकू, वर्ष ७८, कीर्तिपुर, खासीवजार, वि.सं. २०६१) । केही वर्ष पहिलेसम्म पनि दशैँमा कोतघरमा तान्त्रिक पूजाको लागि ललितपुरको कर्माचार्य आउने गरेको कुरा लेखकलाई थाहा छ । रातो मच्छेन्द्रनाथमा नरिवल खसाल्ने पर्वमा त्यहाँ (ललितपुर) गुठीमा खाइने भोजको एक भाग थकालीको घरमा दिन ल्याउने परम्परा यद्यपि छ । पहिले यी प्रधानहरूले ललितपुरमा नै भोज खानु पथ्यो भन्ने कुरा कोतघरका हालका थकाली भन्नु हुन्छ । नेपाल राष्ट्रिय अभिलेखालयमा रहेको माइक्रोफिल्म नं. ए६१२।१२ मा कीर्तिपुरको यस बाघभैरव नृत्यलाई उपलब्ध गराउनु पर्ने केही सामग्रीहरूको फिहरिस्त उल्लेख (महर्जनः २०६१) भएवाट तथा ललितपुरमा राजा हुनु भन्दा पहिले श्रीनिवास मल्लले कीर्तिपुरमा विविध कार्य समेत गरेको उपरोक्त तथ्यबाट बाघभैरव नृत्यको थालनी पनि उनैले गरेको हुनसक्ने कुरा अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ । अधिकांश अष्टमातृका नृत्यका कालाकार गथुहरू भएको, त्यसैकारण हो कि यी नृत्यलाई गथुप्याखं भन्ने गरिएको पाइन्छ । श्रीनिवास मल्ल ललितपुरको राजा भै सकेपछि थालनी भएको ललितपुरको गँ प्याखंका नृत्यकारहरू शाक्यहरू भएको र बाघभैरव नृत्यका नृत्यकारहरू गथुहरू नै भएकाले बाघभैरव नृत्य अमर मल्लकै पालामा थालनी भएको पनि हुन सक्छ, तर माथि उल्लेखित विविध सन्दर्भहरूबाट गथुहरूलाई समावेश गरी श्रीनिवास मल्लद्वारा नै यो बाघभैरव नृत्यको थालनी गरिएको बढी सम्भाव्य देखिन्छ ।

निष्कर्ष

यी नृत्य-नाटकबाट शक्ति देवी तथा देवताहरू साक्षात्कार भएमा उनीहरू कस्ता देखिन्थे भन्ने स्वरूप तथा राक्षसको वध गरी दुष्ट संहार अभिनयको दृश्य प्रदर्शन गराई असत्माथि सत्को विजय हुने कुराको दुनियाँलाई ज्ञान दिलाउँदै सङ्गीत, कला र संस्कृतिको अभिवृद्धि गर्दै जनताको धार्मिक निष्ठा अटल राख्ने भूमिका निभाएको देखिन्छ । नेपाल सरकारबाट यस्ता धार्मिक र सांस्कृतिक संपदालाई राष्ट्रिय सम्पत्ति मानी यिनको संरक्षण र सम्बर्द्धनका लागि समय, परिस्थिति तथा बजारभाउ हेरी आर्थिक सहयोग तथा संरक्षण प्रदान गर्नुका साथै नृत्यमा संलग्न नृत्यकार तथा तिनका परिवारको आर्थिक तथा शैक्षिकस्तर उकास्ने व्यवस्थित उपाय अवलम्बन गरी

सामाजिक मूल्य र मान्यतामा अभिवृद्धि गर्न दरिलो पाइला चाली साविक देखिका सम्पूर्ण विधिविधान अनुरूप संचालन भए नभएको निगरानी गर्न गराउन विशेषज्ञ टोलीको व्यवस्था हुनुपर्दछ । साथै कला-संस्कृतिक पक्षधर संघ-संस्था, स्थानीय सम्बद्ध व्यक्तिहरूबाट यस्ता साँस्कृतिक धरोहरको जगेर्नाका लागि यथावश्यक ध्यान पुर्‍याई क्रियाशील गराउनु आज अपरिहार्य भैसकेको छ । अन्यथा यी लोप भएर जाने छन् ।

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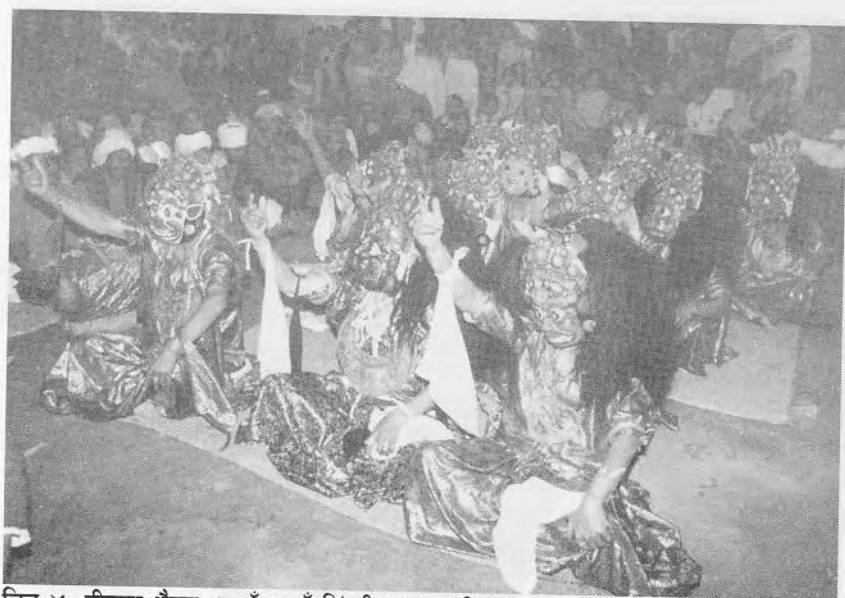
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चित्र २: बाघभैरव नृत्यको प्रथम देश परिक्रमाको अवसरको समूह नृत्य ।



चित्र ३: बाघभैरव नृत्यको प्रथम देश परिक्रमाको अवसरको समूह नृत्य ।



चित्र ४: बीचमा भैरव, दायाँ बायाँ सिंहनी र व्याघ्रनीलगायत अन्य देवीदेवतासहित रात्रीमा प्रार्थना स्वरूप नृत्य ।



चित्र ५: पञ्चतत्त्व स्वरूप बलि लिइने समयको समूह नृत्य



चित्र ६: देवी चामुण्डाले असुर बधको प्रतीक स्वरूप खड्गले पुतलीलाई प्रहार गरेको ।

दुम्जाका श्रीकुशेश्वर महादेव

गंगा कमाचार्य (हाडा)

परिचय

जनकपुर अञ्चलको सिन्धुली जिल्लाको लिलावती र सुवर्ण कौशिकी खोलाका बीच दुम्जामा श्रीकुशेश्वर महादेव ज्योतिर्लिङ्ग स्वरूप प्रकट भएर पनि अधिकांश नेपालीका लागि अपरिचित नै छन् । काठमाडौँ हनुमान ढोकाबाट १८ कोष पूर्वमा पर्ने, वनेपा-सिन्धुली राजमार्गको दुम्जा वेशीको उत्तर खण्डमा पर्ने हिस्को नै कुशेश्वर महादेवको मन्दिर परिसर हो । हिमवत्खण्डमा उल्लेख भएअनुसार ब्रह्माले विश्व श्रृष्टिका लागि तपस्या गर्दा स्वयम् प्रकट भएकाले उक्त शिवलिङ्गलाई आदिलिङ्ग भनिएको हो । नेपालमा भएका चौसठ्ठीवटा लिङ्गहरू मध्ये सबैभन्दा पहिले दर्शन गर्नुपर्ने श्री कुशेश्वर महादेव हुन् । काठमाडौँबाट पूर्व पहिलेको २ नम्बर जिल्लामा मानिसहरूको आवतजावत कम भएको, खोला र खहरेको मात्र आवाज भएको, पुरानो साँघुरो पहाडी बाटोबाट हिँडेर त्यहाँ पुग्नु सजिलो थिएन । तैपनि नेपालका इतिहासकारहरू त्यहाँ पुगेर त्यहाँका पुराना अभिलेखहरूलाई आफ्नो अभिलेख संकलनमा राख्न सफल भएका छन् । कलाकौशलले भरिपूर्ण नभए पनि, दुर्गम क्षेत्रमा अवस्थित शैवधर्ममा आस्था राख्ने हिन्दुधर्मावलम्बीहरूका लागि आस्थाको केन्द्रविन्दुका रूपमा रहेका कुशेश्वर महादेव कहाँ पुगेर भक्तिभाव दर्शाउन सके आफ्नो मनोकामना पूर्ण हुन्छ भन्ने जनधारणा आज पनि कायमै रहेको छ । उक्त स्थलका पुजारी र स्थानीयवासीहरूसँगको साक्षात्कार तथा त्यहाँ प्राप्त ऐतिहासिक स्रोतहरूको अध्ययन गरी कुशेश्वर महादेवका विविध पक्षको वर्णन गर्ने यहाँ जमर्को गरिएको छ ।

शैवधर्मको प्राचीनता

नेपालका वंशावलीहरू अनुसार किराती (वत्तिस वटा) राजाहरूले नेपालमा शासन गर्नु पूर्व दक्षिणबाट नेपाल प्रवेश गरेका अनेकन जातिले शासन गरेका थिए । गोपाल जातिले पशुपतिको पुरिएको ज्योतिर्लिङ्गलाई खनेर निकालेका थिए भनिन्छ । यसरी २००० वर्ष ई.पू. नै पशुपति शिवको अस्तित्व नेपालमा रहेको थाहो हुन्छ ।^१

‘नेपालमाहात्म्य’ तथा ‘हिमवत्खण्ड’ मा दिइएका कथाहरूले नेपाललाई शैवधर्मको महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र सिद्ध गरेका छन् । ती ग्रन्थहरूका आधारमा पनि नेपालमा शैवधर्म निकै पुरानो मान्नु पर्छ । नेपालको सबैभन्दा पुरानो किरात वंशावलीमा पनि शिवलाई किरातहरूको कुलदेवता भनेर वर्णन गरिएको छ । यस धर्मले लोकप्रियता पाइसकेको कुरा किरातहरूले शिवलाई उनीहरूको आफ्नो मूलदेवता मानेकोबाट थाहो हुन्छ । स्वस्थानी व्रतकथामा किरातेश्वर महादेवको उल्लेख छ । पुराणमा मृगस्थलीमा महादेव पुगेको वर्णन छ । किरातहरू शिवलिङ्गको पूजा गर्दथे भन्ने कुराको वर्णन किरातहरूको इतिहासमा पाइन्छ । ब्राह्मण ग्रन्थमा उत्तर तथा उत्तरपूर्व दिशालाई रुद्रको विशेष आवास क्षेत्र भनिएको छ । कैलाश पर्वत शिवको मनपर्ने

वासस्थान हो भने हिमालयपर्वत सतीदेवीले निवासको निमित्त रोजेको स्थान हो । त्यहीँबाट शिव पार्वती मेरुपर्वत, पृथ्वी या अन्य स्थानतिर जानु हुन्थ्यो ।^३ उत्तर पूर्व भनेर नेपाललाई नै संकेत गरेकोले र हिमाली भेकमा किरातीहरूको बसोबास हुने भएकोले शैवधर्मको सम्बन्ध किरातहरूसँग जोडिई नेपालमा पहिलेदेखि नै यस धर्मले प्रभाव पारेको स्पष्ट हुन्छ । पशुपति आर्यघाट स्थित विरूपाक्षको मूर्तिलाई किरातकालीन मानिन्छ । निधारमा पनि आँखा भएका आधाभाग जमीनमा गाडिएका उक्त मूर्तिको लिच्छविहरू अगावै स्थापना भएको अनुमान हुन्छ ।^४ लिच्छविहरूको नेपालमा प्रवेशपछि उक्त मूर्तिको पूजा नगरी उनीहरूले अर्को शिवलिङ्गमा प्राण प्रतिष्ठा गरेको कुरा पनि थाहा हुन्छ ।

इतिहासको विभिन्न कालखण्डमा नेपालका राजपरिवार भित्र शैवधर्मले निकै लोकप्रियता पाएका यथेष्ट प्रमाणहरू प्राप्त छन् । लिच्छवि राजा वृषदेवले (गोपाल वंशावली अनुसार) अथवा उनका छोरा शंकरदेवले (भाषावंशावली अनुसार) पशुपतिको उत्तरपट्टिको ठूलो त्रिशूल चढाएका थिए । उनका पनि छोरा धर्मदेवले पनि त्यहीँ दक्षिण पट्टि ठूलो वृषध्वज स्थापना गरेको कुराको वर्णन भाषावंशावलीमा परेको छ । त्यसपछिका शासक, महारानीहरू समेतले पशुपतिमा धन, चाँदीका कलम, अष्ट पुष्पिका चढाएको कुरा अभिलेख र गोपालवंशावलीमा उल्लेख छ । मानदेव वैष्णव धर्मका अनुयायी भए पनि उनको शैवधर्म प्रति आस्था भएको धेरै प्रमाणहरू प्राप्त छन् । उनका महारानीहरूमा क्षेमसुन्दरीले लाजिम्पाटमा र गुणवतीले टुकुचामा शिवलिङ्ग स्थापना गरेको कुरा तिनका जलहरीहरूमा कुँदिएको अभिलेखबाट पुष्टि हुन्छ । त्यस्तै मानदेवकी छोरी विजयवतीले पशुपति सूर्यघाटमा शिवलिङ्ग स्थापना गरेकी थिइन् । लिच्छविकालमा शैवधर्मलाई राजकीय मान्यता दिनेमा अंशुवर्माको नाम सर्वप्रथम आउँछ । सबैभन्दा पहिले उनैले “भगवत्पशुपति भट्टारक पादानु गृहीतः” को उपाधि ग्रहण गरेका थिए । त्यसपछि उदयदेव, अंशुवर्माका उत्तराधिकारी जिष्णुगुप्त, उनका छोरा विष्णुगुप्त, नरेन्द्रदेव र उनका छोरा शिवदेव द्वितीय आदिले पनि सोही उपाधि ग्रहण गरेका थिए ।^५ दुम्जा कुशेश्वर महादेव स्थित अंशुवर्माको अभिलेखले पनि उनको शैवधर्म प्रतिको आस्था उपत्यका बाहिर पनि पुगेको थियो भन्ने कुरा जनाउँदछ । उनको कैलाशकूट भवन, त्यस समयको कैलाशकूट जात्रा, पशुपति मुद्रा इत्यादिले पनि उनको शैवधर्मप्रतिको आस्था जनाउँछ । यसरी नेपालको प्राचीन इतिहासले शैवधर्मअन्तर्गत शिवलिङ्गको पूजाबारे स्पष्ट पार्छ ।

मल्लकालमा बनेका धेरै शिवमन्दिरहरूले त्यस कालका राजाहरू शैवधर्मका अनुयायी भएको स्पष्ट पार्छन् । नेपाल संवत् २५४ (वि.सं. ११९१) राजा इन्द्रदेव र नेपाल संवत् २८६ (वि.सं. १२२३) का राजा आनन्ददेव पनि परम शैव थिए । जयस्थितिमल्लको चौपाटन अभिलेखमा उनले “श्रीमत्पाशुपताडिपकंजरजः पिण्गुस्फीता” उपाधि लिएको बुझिन्छ । नेपाल संवत् ५१२ (वि.सं. १४४९) को पाटन कुम्भेश्वरको अभिलेखमा “... जस्ले प्रतिदिन कुम्भेश्वर महादेवको आराधना गर्छ शिवलोक जान्छ, मृत आत्मालाई शिवले स्वर्गमा लगे..... भन्ने भाव दर्शाएको छ । जयस्थितिमल्लको जयवागेश्वरी मन्दिरको अभिलेखमा “... मृतारानीलाई शिवले

स्वर्गमा लगे ...” भनिएको छ । मरेपछि सीधै स्वर्गमा पुगिन्छ भन्ने भाव त्यसवेलाका शिवमन्दिरहरूमा राखिएका अभिलेखका वाक्यांशहरूले दर्शाउँछन् । उपत्यकाको इतिहाससँगै पशुपति ज्योतिर्लिङ्गको उत्पत्ति गाँसिएको छ । तर हालको पशुपतिको लिङ्ग वि.सं. १४१७ मा जयधर्ममल्लका महामन्त्री जयसिंह राम वर्धनले स्थापना गरेका हुन् । वि.सं. १४०६ मा बंगालका शासक समसुद्दीनले नेपालमा आक्रमण गरी धेरै मन्दिरहरूमाथि आगो लगाएर नष्ट गरिदिएकाले विधर्मीहरूले छोएको, अशुद्ध भएको र पूजायोग्य नभएको भनी उक्त हमलाको दश वर्षपछि उनले नयाँ शिवलिङ्ग बनाउन लगाएर पुरानो स्थानमा उक्त लिङ्ग स्थापना गरेका हुन् । पुरानो शिवलिङ्ग चाहिँ पश्चिमद्वारको बायाँपट्टि सानो मन्दिर भित्र स्थापना गरिएको छ । त्यसपछिका धेरै मल्ल राजाहरूले आफूलाई शिवको उपासकका रूपमा अभिलेखहरूमा व्यक्त गर्ने गरेका प्रमाणहरू प्राप्त छन् ।

मल्लकालको यस्तो परम्परा शाहकालमा पनि प्रचलित नै रहेको कुरा वि.सं. १८६३ मा रणबहादुर शाहको अकालमा मृत्यु भएपछि उनको स्वर्ग प्राप्तिमा निमित्त कान्छी महारानी ललितात्रिपुरासुन्दरीले वि.सं. १८७४ मा काठमाडौँको त्रिपुरेश्वरमा त्रिपुरेश्वर महादेव स्थापना गरेर त्यसको राम्रो संचालनका निमित्त गुठीको व्यवस्था गरेवाट थाहा हुन्छ । त्यस्तै उनकी भित्र्यानी महारानी लक्ष्मीदेवीले पनि वि.सं. १८६९ मा टेकुमा लक्ष्मेश्वर महादेवको स्थापना गरेर गुठीको पनि राम्रो व्यवस्था गरिदिइन् । उक्त कुराको विस्तृत विवरण ती स्थानहरूमा रहेका अभिलेखहरूमा परेका छन् । सोही उद्देश्यले कपदार भोटु पाँडेले वि.सं. १८६३ मा पशुपतिको दक्षिण ढोकानिर रणबहादुर शाहको सालिक स्थापना गरेर गुठी राखिदिएका थिए जसको संचालन आजसम्म हुँदै आएको छ । काठमाडौँको रणमुक्तेश्वर र भीममुक्तेश्वर पनि त्यस्तै उद्देश्यबाट निर्माण गरिएका हुन् । राणा प्रधानमन्त्रीहरूमा चन्द्र शमशेर शिवका परम भक्त भएका प्रमाणहरू यथेष्ट मात्रामा प्राप्त छन् । त्यस क्षेत्रमा उनले गरेका थुप्रै सामाजिक-धार्मिक कार्यहरू त्यस्तै युरोप जानु अघि उनले गुह्येश्वरी र पशुपतिको दर्शनमा देखाएको भावभक्तिबाट पनि उक्त कुराहरूको पुष्टि हुन्छ । मृतकको अथवा निर्माणकर्ताको नामबाट शिव मन्दिर स्थापना गर्ने परम्परा प्राचीनकालदेखि चलिआएकोमा आज ती शिवमन्दिर, शिवलिङ्गहरू नाम परिवर्तन भएर वा भत्के विग्रेर कतिपयत भेटाउन सकिने अवस्थामा छैनन् । पशुपति भण्डारमा रहेका धेरै अप्रकाशित अभिलेखहरूले नेपालका राजपरिवार या भारदारहरूको शैवधर्मप्रतिको भुकावलाई अझ स्पष्ट पार्न सक्नेछन् ।

दुम्जाको कुशेश्वर महादेव परिसर भित्र अंशुवर्माको अभिलेख प्राप्त हुनुले यो सँगैको शिवलिङ्ग लिच्छविकाल भन्दा पनि पुरानो मान्न सकिन्छ । सुनसान जंगलमा हिस्कोको वीचमा रहेको यो कालो ढुंगाको सादा शिवलिङ्गले यही कुराको संकेत दिन्छ । पाटन सर्वेश्वर मन्दिरमा पनि लिच्छविकालीन अभिलेख रहेको छ । त्यहाँ कालो ढुंगाको सादा शिवलिङ्ग भएको कारणले पनि कुशेश्वर र सर्वेश्वर यी दुवै प्राचीनतामा समान रहेको हुनु पर्छ । त्यस्तै पशुपति भष्मेश्वरको मन्दिर पनि प्राचीनताका हिसावले एक आपसमा समान रहेको हुनु पर्दछ । दुर्गमस्थानमा पहाडको

बीचमा भएको कुशेश्वर महादेव स्थानलाई अन्यत्र जस्तो मुसलमानी आक्रमणको कुनै प्रभाव नपरेको स्पष्ट हुन्छ । मन्दिरको स्वरूप पछि परिवर्तित हुन गएता पनि शिवलिङ्गको मौलिक स्वरूप जस्ताको तस्तै कायम छ ।

कुशेश्वर महादेव मन्दिर परिसर र क्षेत्रफल

काठमाडौँबाट धुलिखेले हुँदै पूर्वतिर सिन्धुली-वर्दिवास राजमार्गको नेपालथोक पुगेपछि पूर्व-उत्तर कोणको सुनकोशी पारीको ढिस्कोमा रहेको जंगल क्षेत्र नै कुशेश्वर महादेवको क्षेत्र हो । ढिस्कोतिर लम्केपछि अलि माथि समथल भूभाग भेटिन्छ । त्यहाँ दायौँतिर जोडिएको दुईतल्ले लामो सत्तल देखापर्दछ । यसको बायाँतर्फ एकतले धुनीशाला निर्माण गरिएको छ । धुनीशालाको बायाँतर्फ ठूलो चौतारो र खुला मैदान पर्दछ । चौतारोको अधिल्लरको पाटीको बीचबाट मन्दिर परिसर पस्ने द्वार बनाइएको छ । करिव ६ आना जति समथर जग्गाको बीचमा कुशेश्वर महादेवको शिवालय अवस्थित छ । सतहबाट तीन खुडकिला पार गरेपछि मन्दिर भित्रको कुशेश्वर शिवलिङ्ग भएको स्थानमा पुगिन्छ । मभौला आकारको कालो ढुँगाको सादा शिवलिङ्ग सानो कोठाको बीचमा अवस्थित छ । पाञ्चायन देवता पूजा गर्ने विधानअनुसार लिङ्ग मूर्तिको पछाडि ती देवदेवीका मूर्तिहरू राखिएका छन् । फूल र प्रसाद चढाइएको सुन्दर शिवलिङ्ग देख्दा त्यहाँ नित्य पूजा राम्ररी चल्दै गरेको अनुमान गर्नु सकिन्छ (हेर्नुहोस्, चित्र नं. १ र २) । मन्दिरको परिक्रमा बाहिरतिरबाट मात्र गर्न सकिन्छ । शिवलिङ्गको पूर्ण प्रदक्षिणा गर्नु हुँदैन, आधा मात्र गर्नु पर्दछ भन्ने विधिविधान अनुसार गृहस्थ बायाँबाट दायाँ र दायाँबाट बायाँ गर्नु पर्छ । शिवालय चिनाउने मुख्य आधारको रूपमा रहेको धातुको त्रिशूल मन्दिरको पछाडि गाडिएको छ । शिवले धातुको त्रिशूल प्रयोग गरेर घमण्डी असुरहरूलाई पाठ सिकाएको उल्लेख पुराणहरूमा छ । शिवको त्रिशूल प्रयोगसँग त्रिशूली नदीको उत्पत्ति र गोसाइँकुण्डको निर्माण सम्बन्धी कथा पनि जोडिएको छ ।^१

मन्दिरको प्रवेशद्वारका दायाँ बायाँ दुईवटा घण्टहरू भुण्ड्याइएका छन् । एउटामा श्री सम्वत् १८७७ (वि.सं.) कूँदिएको छ भने अर्कोमा दिइएको सम्वत् १९७६ स्पष्ट छैन । शिवालयको पूर्वाधारको रूपमा रहेको ढुँगाको बसाहा मूर्ति द्वारअगाडि स्थापित छ । त्यसको पादपीठमा “२०५० साल जेष्ठ ९ गतेमा स्थापित बसाहा मूर्ति” भन्ने वाक्यांश परेको छ । बसाहाको दायौँतर्फ ढुँगामाथि हनुमानको मूर्ति स्थापित छ । त्यसमा २०६१-८-१६ मा कोइराला परिवारले स्थापना गरेको भन्ने अभिलेख रहेको छ ।

मन्दिरको दायौँतर्फ एउटा एकतले पाँच कवलको पाटी उत्तर दक्षिण छिचोलेर स्थापना गरिएको छ । मन्दिरमा पूजा गर्न आएका भक्तजनहरूले त्यहाँ बसी पूजासामान मिलाउने, प्रसाद लिने, विश्राम गर्ने, भजनकीर्तनको काम इत्यादि गर्ने गर्दछन् । त्यसबाट बाहिर निस्कने मैदानमा पृथ्वीवीरविक्रम शाहकी धाइआमा जनक कुमारी कोइरालाले वि.सं. १९४५ मा दुइतल्ले सत्तल निर्माण गराएकी थिइन । सत्तलको माथिल्लो तलाको भण्डार कोठामा दुइवटा शिलालेखहरू राखिएका छन् ।

एउटामा श्रीसम्बत १८७७ कुँदैएको छ भने अर्कोका अक्षरहरू अस्पष्ट भएर बुझ्न सकिने छन् (हेर्नुहोस् चित्र नं. ५) । सोही मिति प्रवेशद्वारको घण्टामा पनि भएकाले यो नायव महारानी ललितात्रिपुरा सुन्दरीले चढाएको हुनुपर्छ । प्रधानमन्त्री भीमसेन थापाले उनको कृति काठमाण्डौमा (त्रिपुरेश्वर महादेव) स्थापना गरेपछि दुम्जासम्म पनि पुर्‍याएको कुरा यसबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ ।

कुशेश्वर महादेवको उत्पत्ति

सिन्धुली जिल्लाका लिलावती र सुवर्णकौशिकी नदीसँगै दुम्जा बेसीमा कुशेश्वर महादेवको शिवलिङ्ग उत्पत्ति भएको मानिन्छ । आदिलिङ्ग भएकाले नेपालमा भएका ६४ वटा लिङ्गमध्ये सबैभन्दा पहिले यिनको दर्शन गर्नुपर्ने धार्मिक परम्परा रहँदै आएको छ । हिमवत्खण्डका अनुसार ब्रह्माले संसार सृष्टि गर्न तपस्या गर्दा यो लिङ्ग उत्पत्ति भएकाले यसलाई आदिलिङ्ग मानेको हो । हिमवत्खण्डमा त्यसबारे यस्तो पंक्ति लेखिएको छ:

शैलान्ध्रष्टु रहो ब्रह्मा दध्यौ पुरात्र शंकरं ।

ततः समुद्भवं लिङ्गमादिलिङ्गमुदाहृतम् ॥ ६०॥

आदिलिङ्गः स्थितो यत्र कौशिक्याश्च ततोत्तमे ।

कुशेश्वर इति ख्यातस्तन्नैपालो विराजते ॥ १४॥

(हिमवत्खण्ड, अध्याय ७०, पृ. १५४)

कुनै गाई, व्याधा अथवा यात्रीले कुशेश्वर शिवलिङ्ग भेटाएका हुन् भन्ने कुरा सबैले सत्य तथ्यको रूपमा स्वीकार गर्दै आएका छन् । वास्तवमा उक्त स्थानमा उत्खनन् पछि मात्र स्थानीयबासीले शिवलिङ्ग भेटाएर पूजा गर्ने गरेको भन्ने कुरामा एकरूपता भए पनि कुशेश्वर नाम कसरी रहन गयो भन्ने बारे चाहिँ अड्कल मात्र लगाउन सकिन्छ । कुशै कुश मात्र भएको स्थानमा प्राप्त भएको शिवलिङ्गलाई कुशेश्वर महादेव भनिएको हो कि?

पूजाआजा र आम्दानी

कुशेश्वर महादेवको पूजाआजाको व्यवस्था मिलाउन विभिन्न कालका राजाहरूले सहयोग गरेको कुरा कुशेश्वर महादेव परिसरमा रहेका विभिन्न मितिका अभिलेखहरूबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ । कान्तिपुरका राजा जगजयमल्ल अत्यन्त धर्मात्मा पशुपति भक्त थिए । पशुपतिमा महाभोग अर्पण तथा प्रशस्त गुठी राखिदिए जस्तै दोलखा भिमेश्वरको वि.सं. १७७६-१७८४ सम्मका अभिलेखहरू तथा अनेक दस्तावेजहरू प्राप्त भएवाट पूर्वमा दोलखासम्म उनको राज्य फैलिएको कुरा स्पष्ट हुन्छ । उनले कुशेश्वर महादेवको पूजाआजाका निमित्त भाँगा भोली खहरेको १४० रोपनी (५६० मुरी) को फलफूल वारी र पाखासमेत गुठी राखी दिएको कुरा उनको वि.सं. १७८८ (ने.सं. ८५१) को तत्कालीन महन्त महेश गिरिलाई गरिदिएको ताम्रपत्रबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ । यिनै राजाले ढुंगाको स्तूप माथि ढुंगाको बसाहा, चाँदीको

मुकुट र गहना चढाएको, गीर्जा क्याम्प (चारैतिर पर्खाल) र सानो धर्मशालाको समेत निर्माण गरिदिएको कुरा शिलालेखमा उल्लेख छ (हेर्नुहोस्, परिशिष्ट नं. १) । वि.सं. १८३६ मा नायबी राजेन्द्रलक्ष्मीले बेलपत्र, धतुरो र पुष्पमाला कुशेश्वर महादेवलाई चढाएको व्यहोरा शिलालेखमा उल्लेख भएको छ । त्यस्तै जनसमुदायबाट पनि वि.सं. १९४५ मा जनक कुमारी कोइरालाले रूद्राक्षमाला भएको चाँदीको ठूलो चँदुवा र तामाको जलहारी चढाएकी थिइन् ।^१ कुशेश्वर महादेवको जग्गा वर्षेनी नदीबाट कटान हुने हुँदा र तिरोसमेत केही वर्षयतादेखि नतिर्ने भएकाले आम्दानीमा कमी भएको गुनासो पूजारी र समितिको रहेको छ । कुशेश्वर महादेवको गुठी जग्गा जनकपुर, मटिहानी शिवगुठीमा दर्ता छ ।

दैनिक पूजा: हरेक विहान पूजाको सामान- फलफूल, नैवेद्य मिष्ठान्न, धूपदीप, गाईको दूध आदि तयार गरिन्छ । विहान नियमित पूजाका लागि बाहेक अन्य समयमा मन्दिर खुला रहने गर्छ । दर्शनार्थीको लागि दिनभरी खुला रहेर साँझमा धूप बत्ति वाली पूजा गरिन्छ । पूजाआजाको व्यवस्था मिलाउन ८,९ जनाको एउटा समिति गठन गरिएको छ । केहीदेखि दाहाल र कोइराला परिवारबाट पुजारीको रूपमा कुशेश्वर महादेवको पूजा हुने गरेको छ । भक्तजनहरूबाट रूद्री पाठ, पूजाआजा गर्न भनी दिएको नगद जिन्सी नै उनको आम्दानीको स्रोत हो ।

पर्व पूजा: दिनहुँ आउने दर्शनार्थीहरूका अतिरिक्त विशेष दिनहरूमा त्यहाँको चहलपहल अर्कै हुन्छ । प्रत्येक पूर्णिमा, सोमवार र मंगलवार, एकादशी, वालाचतुर्दशी, शिवरात्री, श्रावणको प्रत्येक सोमवार, तीज, अक्षय तृतीया, दशहरा, नागपंचमी, ऋषिपंचमी, श्रीपञ्चमी, दशैंको घटस्थापना देखि पूर्णिमाको १५ दिनसम्म त्यहाँ मेला लाग्ने हुन्छ । काभ्रे, सिन्धुली र रामेछाप गरी तीन जिल्लाको त्यो संगमस्थल भएकोले ती जिल्लाहरूबाट आएका भक्तालुहरूको त्यहाँ घुइँचो लाग्ने गर्दछ । सिन्धुली बर्दिवास राजमार्ग शुरु भएपछि त्यहाँ भक्तालुहरूको संख्या स्वभावले भन बढ्न थालेको छ ।

परमहंस गोपालदास बाबाको योगदान

वि.सं. १९९६ मा गोपालदास बाबा नामका एक साधु पूर्वतिरबाट आएर कुशेश्वर महादेव परिसरमा बस्न थाले । मठ मन्दिर चाहार्दै हिँड्ने क्रममा उनी त्यहाँ आएर त्यहाँको अवस्था सुधार्ने काममा लागे । पूजारी, सरसफाइको व्यवस्थामा लागेर उनले हालको शिवालय र यज्ञशालाको पनि निर्माण गर्न लगाए । त्यस्तै त्यहाँको पुरानो घण्टाको जीर्णोद्धार गरी धुनीशालाको मरम्मत गर्न लगाए । उनले गरेका भौतिक निर्माणका प्रयासहरूको त्यहाँका वासिन्दाहरू आज पनि सराहना गर्दछन् । उनको निधनपछि उनको शरीर त्यहीं समाधिस्थ गरिएको कुरा वि.सं. २०१० को मन्दिर परिसर बाहिरको ठूलो कालो ढुङ्गाको शिवलिङ्गमा कुँदिएको अभिलेखबाट थाहा हुन्छ ।

नेपालका शिवलिङ्ग

नेपालमा शिवलिङ्ग पूजाको प्रचलन बढ्दै गएको सन्दर्भमा त्यसको स्वरूप, आकार प्रकार वारे संक्षेपमा चर्चा गर्नु सान्दर्भिक नै देखिन्छ। शिवलिङ्ग साधारणतया दुई प्रकारका मानिन्छन्- १. साधारण शिवलिङ्ग र २. मुख लिङ्ग। दुवैथरीका शिवलिङ्गहरूमा कलाकारले आफ्नो कलाको माध्यमबाट भक्तहरूको मन लोभ्याउन सक्ने हुन्छ। एक मुखदेखि पाँचमुखे शिवलिङ्ग पनि पशुपति क्षेत्रभित्र दर्शन गर्न सकिन्छ। मुख भएका शिवलिङ्गहरूमा पनि कुनै स्पष्ट, सुन्दर आकृतिको हुन्छ भने कुनैमा भद्दा खालको र कुनैमा आकृति मात्र देखिने पनि हुन्छन्। कुशेश्वर महादेव आदीलिङ्ग भएकाले यो सादा लिङ्ग स्वरूप छ। चिप्लो, कालो ढुङ्गाबाट निर्मित यो शिवलिङ्ग सुन्दर छ।

ज्योतिर्लिङ्गलाई पाषाण स्वरूपमा कहिले देखि बनाउन थालियो भन्ने कुरा स्पष्ट भन्न नसकिएता पनि मगध साम्राज्यमा ब्राह्मणवर्गको प्रभुत्व बढेपछि तिनीहरूले मूर्ति पूजालाई प्राधान्य दिएको अनुमान हुन्छ। यसको व्यापक प्रचार प्रसारको क्रममा त्यहाँ लिच्छविहरूले यसलाई स्वीकारे। वंशावलीअनुसार सुपुष्पदेव वा पशुप्रेक्षदेव नै लिङ्ग स्थापक र पहिलो पशुपति मन्दिर निर्माणकर्ता हुन सक्छन्। नेपालमा ६४ वटा ज्योतिर्लिङ्गहरू रहेका छन् भने पशुपति क्षेत्रमा मात्र ७ वटा ज्योतिर्लिङ्गहरू रहेका छन्। तिनीहरूमा सिद्धेश्वर, किरातेश्वर, जलेश्वर, भष्मेश्वर, भुवनेश्वर, पर्वतेश्वर र रुद्र गोरेश्वर रहेका छन्। श्रावण महिनामा ती ज्योतिर्लिङ्गहरूमा जल चढाउनेहरूको घुँइचो लाग्ने हुन्छ।

कुशेश्वर महादेव टेकु- मत्तुलुङमा

काठमाडौँ उपत्यका भित्र धेरै स्थानमा कुशेश्वर महादेवको स्थापना गरिएको छ। त्यसमध्ये टेकु मत्तुलुङस्थित कुशेश्वर महादेवलाई त्यहाँका डंगोल परिवारले आफ्ना कुलदेवता मान्ने गरेको र उनीहरूका मूल कुलदेवताचाहिँ दुम्जाकै कुशेश्वर महादेव हुन् भन्ने गरेकाले उनीहरूद्वारा यहाँ प्राण प्रतिष्ठा गरिएका उक्त कुशेश्वर महादेवको वर्णन विना यो लेखले पूर्णता पाउन नसक्ने भएकाले त्यसको छोटो वर्णन गर्ने प्रयास यहाँ गरिएको छ।

कीर्तिपुर ट्याङ्ला फाँटको प्राचीन कुशेश्वर महादेवलाई पनि सार्वजनिक रूपमा स्थानीयवासीहरूले वि.सं. २०५१ सालदेखि उत्थान र सम्भार गर्न थालेका छन्। करिव १०-१२ आनाको क्षेत्रफलमा स्थापित कुशेश्वर महादेवको वरिपरी पाञ्चायण गण देवता स्थापित छन्। दैनिक पूजा गर्न आउनेका अतिरिक्त त्यहाँ विशेष दिनहरूमा वरिपरिका गाउँहरूबाट दर्शनार्थीहरूको ठूलो घुँइचो लाग्ने गर्दछ।

काठमाडौँका मूल नेवार जाति मानिने डंगोल परिवारका केही शाखा प्राचीनकालदेखि नै क्षेत्राधिकार (भूमिसम्बन्धी काम हेर्ने) को कामको शिलशिलामा दुम्जामा बस्दै आइरहेका थिए। वि.सं १५२७ को पशुपतिनाथ भष्मेश्वर अभिलेखले पशुपति क्षेत्र पहिलेदेखि नै पशुपतिनाथको हो भन्ने जनाउँछ। पशुपतिक्षेत्रको व्यवस्था मिलाउन खोज्दा राजा महेन्द्रमल्ल असफल हुँदा एकदिन सपनामा पशुपतिनाथले

दर्शन दिएर “दुम्जाका कुशेश्वर महादेवका पूजारीको सल्लाहबाट काम मिलाउनु” भन्ने आदेश पाएकाले दुम्जाका ती डंगोल परिवारसँग उनको सम्पर्क रहन गएको थियो । दुम्जाको भूमि विभागअन्तर्गतको कार्यालयमा कार्यरत चार डंगोल परिवारलाई उनले काठमाडौँमा भिकाएर पशुपति क्षेत्रको नापनक्साको काम सुम्पिदिए । विना अवरोध काम पूरा गरेकाले राजाले तिनीहरूलाई उपत्यकामा नै बस्ने अधिकार दिए । त्यसमध्ये एकजनालाई पशुपति जयवागेश्वरीनिर, अर्कोलाई त्रिशूलीमा बस्न पठाइयो भने बाँकी दुईजनालाई काठमाडौँ पान्चल क्षेत्र टेकुमा बस्ने अधिकार दिइयो । टेकुमा बस्ने ती दुई दाजुभाइ र तिनका वंशजहरू वर्षेनी देवालीपूजा मनाउन दुम्जा कुशेश्वर महादेव स्थान जाने गरेर आफ्नो परम्परालाई निभाउँदै आइरहेका थिए । तर पछि भौगोलिक विकटता, यातायातको कठिनाई माथि विचार गरेर मुनिराज र उनका भाइले ने. सं. ७४० (वि.सं. १६७७) मा टेकु मतलुङमा दुम्जाका कुशेश्वर महादेवको प्राण प्रतिष्ठा गरी स्थापना गरेको कुरा देवस्थल भित्र रहेको सानो शिलालेखमा अंकित छ । आफूलाई आभीरवंशी बताउने ती डंगोल परिवारले आफ्ना पूर्खाहरू प्राचीनकालदेखि दुम्जामा रहँदै आएको र दुम्जाको कुशेश्वर महादेव तिनीहरूका कुलदेवता हुन् भन्ने कुरामा दावी गर्छन् । “महेन्द्रमल्लले अन्यत्रबाट अनेक परिवार भिकाई, घरखेत विर्ता दान दिई काठमाडौँ शहरको आवादी बढाए” भन्ने कुरा वंशावलीमा उल्लेख भएकाले मुनिराज र उनका भाईका पुर्खाहरू दुम्जाबाट काठमाडौँ आएर बसेको, भन्ने कुरा इतिहास सम्मत पनि देखिन्छ ।^{१०}

टेकु-मतलुङका कुशेश्वर महादेवको मन्दिर परिसर र व्यवस्था

टेकु-मतलुङमा स्थापित कुशेश्वर महादेव मन्दिर हाल काठमाडौँ वडा नं. १२ मा पर्दछ । कुशेश्वर महादेव र केही पाञ्चायन गण देवतालाई सानो पर्खालले मात्र छुट्याएर राखेको र मन्दिर परिसरमा पर्खालको घेरा समेत दिइएको थिएन । पूजाआजा मिलाउनका निमित्त वि.सं. २००३ मा हिरादेवी डंगोलले देवताको सामुन्ने एउटा सानो पाटी निर्माण गर्न लगाएकी थिइन् । कुशेश्वर महादेवको र वरिपरिका देवस्थलको जग्गासमेत अतिक्रमणमा पर्न थालेपछि सम्बन्धित डंगोल परिवारको ध्यान त्यसतर्फ आकर्षित हुन थाल्यो । वि.सं. २०२८ सालमा त्यसको संरक्षण गर्ने उद्देश्यले तिनीहरूले थालनी गरेको प्रयासको फलस्वरूप वि.सं. २०४६ सालमा त्यसलाई व्यवस्थित गर्न नापनक्साको काम थालनी भयो । वि.सं. २०५१ सालमा हिरालाल सिंह डंगोलको अध्यक्षतामा “कुशेश्वर विकास समिति” गठन भयो । यो समितिले त्यहाँ सुरक्षा प्रवन्धका लागि केही निर्माण कार्य पनि गर्‍यो । वि.सं. २०५७ सालमा श्री ५ को सरकारका तर्फबाट “श्री कुशेश्वर क्षेत्र सम्पदा संरक्षण प्रतिष्ठान” को रूपमा मान्यता प्राप्त गरेपछि त्यस समयदेखि आजसम्म हिरालाल सिंह डंगोलको अध्यक्षतामा त्यहाँको कामकाज हुँदै आइरहेको छ ।

दुम्जाकै कुशेश्वर महादेवलाई डंगोल परिवारले मतलुङमा प्राण प्रतिष्ठा गरेकाले त्यसलाई एउटा सुन्दर मन्दिरभित्र सजाएर राखेका छन् । मन्दिर पस्ने द्वारको दायोतर्फ भुण्ड्याएको एउटा घण्टामा ने.सं. ११११ माघ शुक्ल द्वितीयाको दिन (वि.सं.

२०४७) मा दुम्जाटारको श्री कुशेश्वरको महादेव दर्शन गरेर आएको उपलक्ष्यमा यो घण्ट भन्दाएको हो” भन्ने अभिलेख परेको छ (हेर्नुहोस् फोटो नं. ३ र ४) । त्यस्तै वि.सं. २०५१ मा पनि समितिका सम्बद्ध व्यक्तिहरू दुम्जाका कुशेश्वर महादेव कहाँ पुगेर त्यहाँको धुनीशालाको जीर्णोद्धारसमेत गरेर फर्केका थिए । प्रत्येक दिन विहान ७-९ वजेसम्म मन्दिर परिसरमा प्रतिष्ठानका कार्यकारी सदस्यहरूको बैठक बस्ने गरेर आफ्ना मूल कुलदेवता कुशेश्वर महादेवका बारेमा समेत छलफल गर्ने गरिन्छ । यसबाट दुम्जाटारका कुशेश्वर महादेवसँग तिनीहरूको सम्बन्ध र सम्पर्क कुनै न कुनै रूपमा रहँदै आएको स्पष्ट हुन्छ ।

उपसंहार

स्थानीय बासिन्दाले मात्र होइन काठमाडौँ उपत्यका भित्रका धेरै शैवमार्गीहरूको पनि दुम्जाका कुशेश्वर महादेव प्रति निकै भक्तिभाव रहेको पाइन्छ । नेपाल र छिमेकी देश भारतमा पनि सकटमोचन गर्ने देवताका रूपमा शिवको पूजा हुने गर्दछ । जसरी भए पनि जीवनमा एकपल्ट कुशेश्वर महादेव कहाँ पुग्ने पर्छ भन्ने धार्मिक विश्वासलाई माथि वर्णित डंगोल परिवारले जीवितै राखेका छन् । त्यस्तै कुशेश्वर महादेवको खेतको कुनै पनि आम्दानीमा कसैले हात नलगाउने र जतिसुकै ठूलो बाढी पहिरो जस्ता प्रकोपबाट पनि कुशेश्वर महादेवको परिसर यथावतै रहनुमा स्थानीयवासीको आस्था र विश्वास लुकेको प्रतीत हुन्छ । नेपालमा शैवमार्गीहरूको संख्या दिनपर दिन बढ्दै गएको र शैवधर्मले प्राचीनकालदेखि नै राजकीय धर्मको रूपमा मान्यता प्राप्त गरेकाले अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय क्षेत्रमा समेत शैवमन्दिरहरू चर्चित हुन पुगेका छन् । उपत्यका भित्र विभिन्न समयमा बनेका धेरै शैवमन्दिरहरू छन् । निर्माणकर्ताले आफ्नो उद्देश्य अनुरूप ती शिवमन्दिरहरूको नाम राख्ने गरेको कुरा स्पष्ट छ । ६४ लिङ्ग मध्ये पहिले दर्शन गर्नु पर्ने भन्ने मान्यता बोकेका दुम्जाको कुशेश्वर महादेवको आफ्नै विशेषता छ । काठमाडौँ उपत्यकाको नजिकमा पर्ने काभ्रे, सिन्धुली र रामेछाप जिल्ला अर्थात् उपत्यका, पहाड र तराईको समेत भौगोलिकता, संस्कृति र इतिहास बोकेका दुम्जामा रहेका कुशेश्वर महादेवको विशेषता अरु स्थानको भन्दा भिन्न हुनु स्वाभाविक नै हो । हिन्दू धर्मको पर्यायको रूपमा शैवधर्म भन्ने प्रचलन पनि छ । यस धर्ममा सहिष्णुता भएकाले एउटै राजा विष्णु र शिवका पनि भक्त भएका छन् । अंशुवर्माका अभिलेखहरूले वैष्णव र शैव धर्मको सहिष्णुतावारे प्रस्ट पार्दछन् । “धर्म सबैका लागि” भन्ने नाराका साथ चलेको शैव धर्ममा ब्रह्मा, विष्णु र बुद्धका अनुयायीहरू पनि एकै स्थानमा अटाएका छन् । पाटनको सर्वेश्वर महादेवको विभिन्न समयमा गरिने प्रदर्शनमा देखाइने तीनवटा लिङ्ग मूर्ति मध्ये तेस्रोमा बुद्धको मूर्ति कुँदिएको छ । यसबाट शैवधर्मावलम्बीहरूले पनि बुद्धको मूर्तिलाई स्वीकारेर आफूसँगै राख्न चाहेको स्पष्ट हुन्छ । दुवै थरीका धर्मावलम्बीहरूले एकअर्काका धार्मिक उत्सवहरूमा भाग लिने गर्दछन् ।

कुशेश्वर महादेवको महिमा बुझ्ने धेरै भक्तालुहरू वरपरका जिल्लाहरूबाट दुम्जामा ओइरिने गर्दछन् । पूर्वी भेकका हिन्दूधर्मावलम्बीहरूका लागि कुशेश्वर

महादेव नै नजिकको पवित्र देवस्थल हो । यसको संरक्षण सम्बर्द्धन र तीर्थस्थलका रूपमा विकास गर्न काठमाडौं, मत्तुलुङ्का डंगोल परिवार पनि तयार देखिन्छन् । यस्तो विकासका त्यहाँ धेरै संभावनाहरू छन् ।

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परिशिष्ट नं. १

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परिचय

यो ताम्रपत्र कान्तिपुरका राजा जगज्जयमल्लले दुम्जाका कुशेश्वर महादेवलाई गुठि राखि त्यहाँका तात्कालीक महन्तलाई गरिदिएका हुन् । सो सक्कलप्रति गुठी जाँच अड्डामा नै रहेको र रितपूर्वक श्री ५ सरकार गुठि जाँच अड्डाको छाप लागेकोले सोहि नक्कल बमोजिम यहाँ दिइएको छ । तर यो पत्र उत्थान गर्नेले अशुद्ध पढेका छन् । यसमा “यो पत्र पोस्तक खानावाट उत्थान भएको” भनि लेखिएको छ ।

अभिलेखको पाठ

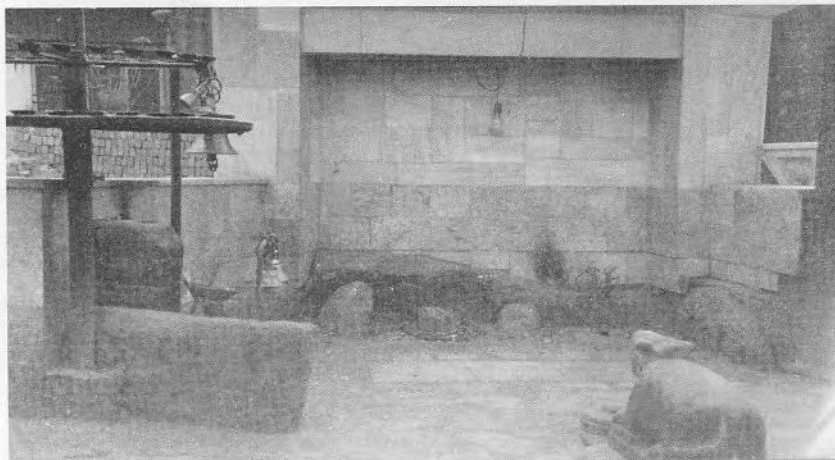
ॐ स्वस्ति ॥ श्री मत्पशुपति चरण कमल थुलि धुशरीत शिरोलढ श्री मन्मानेश्वरीष्ट देवता बरलब्ध प्रसाद देदिप्यमान मानोन्नत श्री रघुवांवतार रविकुल तिलक हनुमथ्वज नेपालेश्वर महाराजाधिराज राज राजेन्द्र सकलराज चक्राधिश्वर निजेष्ट देव देवी कृपा कटाक्ष वरित विक्रमोपार्जित वारणा कर समुद्धूत गजेन्द्रपति श्री श्री जय जगज्जयमल्ल परम भट्टारक देवानां सदासमर विजयि नां प्रभु ठाकुर सम बलभद्र गिरीया चेला महेश गिरी यात नाया विया बल पागीली वताहे तामापत्र चोया वियाँ पुंजा गुन्या दती तिमिल्या वु खेत छें एयि येलो भनि १४० प्रसन्न जुया इगतुली जुया वलासोने भद तस्व दुम्जा महादेव नीत अछिन्द्र याद्रा पुजाया सोनीर तर योमाल स्वगुली वुया थास सर्वदली महन्त उमरावो यति स्वोतँ यवि सदतो लेतक राज कराया म सहठ अन्त्र पत्रार्थे दृष्ट साछि श्री जयप्रकाश मल्ल देव ॥ संवत् ८५१ वैशाख वदि १२ शुभम्—



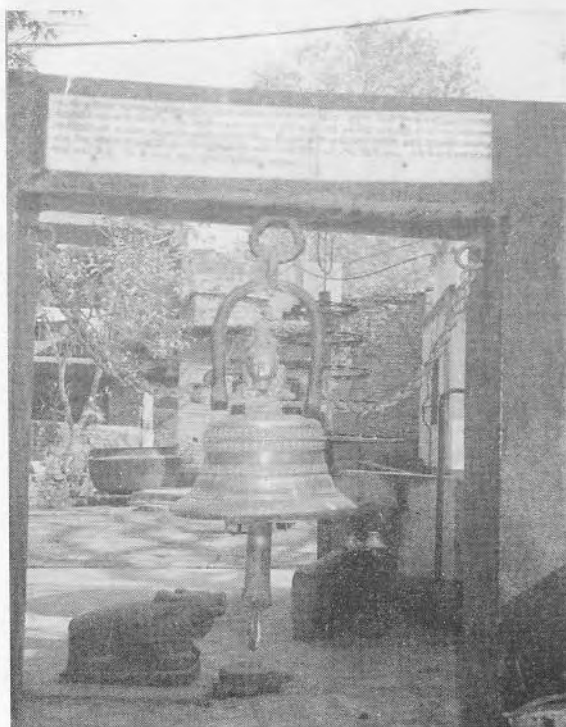
चित्र १: दुम्जा कुशेश्वर महादेव मन्दिर पस्ते प्रवेश द्वार



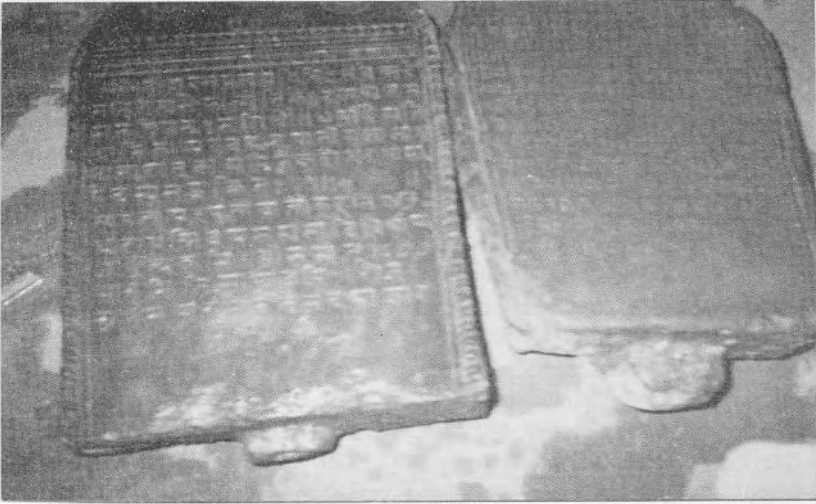
चित्र २: मन्दिर भित्रको शिवलिङ्ग



चित्र ३: मतुलुङका कुशेश्वर महादेव स्थल



चित्र ४: ने.सं. ११११ को उल्लेख भएको काठमाण्डौ मतुलुङको घण्टा



चित्र ५: मन्दिर परिसरको भण्डार भित्र राखिएका दुई अभिलेखहरू

BOOK REVIEW

Pandey, Ram Niwas 2059 VS. *The Mathas of Dasanami Sanyasis of Lalitpur, Kathmandu Valley*. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, pp. 134 (including inscriptional portion and photo plates). Price NRs 368.

The study on the cultural activity of the people of Nepal is ever since an interesting subject for foreign as well as native writers. The religious activities which rely on the social behaviours and the sphere of entire community may indicate the cultural life of the people in subsequent times.

The Kathmandu valley is rich in traditional cultural practices. Many religious sects have emerged and prevailed since earlier phases of historical periods, which can only be identified through distinct religious practices. From the Lichhavi period many sects and sub-sects had a plenty of opportunity to flourish as the component of Shaiva and Vaisnava in Hinduism as well as Mahayana and Vajrayana in Buddhism. As a matter of fact, many sects emerged for performing easy and symbolic worship with minimal practices of religious and cultural performances. Many such religious acts can be seen necessary for different communities in a supportive element even to this day.

There appeared a handful of books and articles by native and foreign writers, which throw light on the religious beliefs and practices of the people – both on Hinduism and Buddhism. However, Buddhist culture and performances have been the subject of interest in order to understand the socio-religious environment of the Kathmandu valley. Besides, the sub-sects of Hinduism also flourished in the Valley from earlier times, which reveal as an interesting component of the cultural life of people. It is notable that *tantrism* played a vital role in infusing the concept of symbolic and secret worship of the deity, which eventually brought together many such religious doctrines in a common sphere. Hindu deities, for example, have been worshipped through assigned *mantra* and symbols in many such rituals.

This book highlights one of the religious practices prevailed in Hinduism since early medieval period. When the cult of the Gorkhanath was popularized in the Kathmandu valley, many *tantric* ways of performances have taken place not only in the individual practices but also in the common rituals and ceremonies. In this context, it is also illustrable here that this *Dasanami panthi* symbolically maintained the close proximity to the Vajrayana sect of Buddhism for some of its ritual practices. For example, Machhendranath is paid homage by both religious streams. During the chariot festival the *ratha* is also worshipped by the *yogis* in their own traditional way before proceeding ahead for the procession in the city. In this context, Nepalese people have been paying an equal reverence to the Hindu

and Buddhist deities and monuments. The kings of the Valley also extended their belief by providing lands and gifts from the state in order to sustain the traditional culture from the earlier times.

The author passed away few years back leaving behind his works. This book perhaps is the last work of his life that conveys the views of his long teaching and research experiences in the field of history and culture of Nepal. It is the outcome of the project of Royal Nepal Academy undertaken by the author.

The book mainly deals with the cultural and religious performances of the Mathas and their present status nestling in the core city of Lalitpur.

It contains 6 chapters: the first chapter deals with the 'Introduction' of the Dasanami Sanyasis of Lalitpur. Here the author simply traces the link with Dattatraya temple of Bhaktapur which is believed to have been established during 13th to 14th century A.D. The Mathas had been expanded in various parts of the Valley particularly in Lalitpur during 16th to 17th century A.D. This is also ascertainable that from the time of King Yoganarendra Malla, the Mathas were patronized by donating many lands as Guthi for their proper maintenance and conservation. Similarly, the second chapter is about Taulako Matha in which he tries to trace the detail rituals performed in the Matha. The Mahanta of this monastery, as it is believed, came from Sringeri Matha of South India. Architecturally, this Matha, however, has lost its original shape as many renovation works had undergone. The temple of Dattatraya is built with two storeys in front of the structure of the Matha. Likewise, for the descriptions of other Mathas the book yields separate chapters on each of them. For example, Tuvaha Math is described in third chapter while fourth chapter is about Vahalukha Math. Similarly, chapter five narrates Chalkhu Matha, and last chapter six is devoted to Chhayavaha Math. The author here attempts to give detailed pictures of the various festivals performed in the monasteries. As for historical fact, the inscriptions are also collected here under the 'List of Stone Inscriptions'. However, recorded inscriptions show these are not solely of stone stele but also metallic bells around the temples. The last portion of the book includes photo plates.

From the inscriptional point of view, Tuilako Matha has the inscription of NS 816, which appears to be the earliest one, while Chalakhu, Tumbaha, Bahalukha and Chhayabaha have inscriptions dated NS 864, NS 898, NS 863 and NS 868 respectively. Similarly, there are different names of the presiding deities in each Matha. For example, Mukteswara Mahadeva in Chalakhu Matha, Vishesworanath in Tumbaha Matha, Trilingeswara in Bhalukha Matha, Dattatraya in Tuilako Matha and Visheswara Mahadeva in Chhayavaha Matha. In three Mathas namely Chalakho, Tumbaha and Tuilakhu the Mahantas bear the 'Puri' title while Mahanta of Bahalukha holds 'Giri' and Chhayabaha the 'Bharati' under the group of Dasanami Sannyasi.

Likewise, the names of the founder of Mathas are also ascertainable. From the inscriptional records it is narrated that Sundara Puri is the founder of the Chalakhu Matha; Pitambar Puri founded Tumbaha Matha; Amar Giri Bahalukha Matha; Vinod Puri Tuilakhu Matha and Jai Kishor Bharati Chhayabaha Matha.

From the inscriptional point of view the history of the Matha culture of Lalitpur started not earlier than 1696 A.D. However, according to some of the members of the Matha they came from the Singeri Matha of South India in the medieval period.

It is also illustrable that the book still bears the paucity of detailed information which seems very sketchy rather than scholarly. The author does not try to trace the origin of Sanyasi but mentions their arrival in Lalitpur town through Dhunibesi, Dhading district, where they had made their abode before entering the Valley (p.2). It is also interesting that Dattatraya Matha of Bhaktapur is said to have been the earliest one from where many Mathas of the Valley emerged as its branches. The book has not attempted to cover the information on the origin of Matha culture and their comparison to each of them. The book is simply a collection of the information of five Mathas of the Lalitpur city.

Besides, the most noteworthy thing is that the author couldn't pay attention to the citation of the inscriptions and photographs in the chapters which are given at the end of the book. There is no serial numbers given to the inscriptional part; nor any portion of translation is given at the end of each inscription. Therefore, readers may be confused. The monasteries are not correctly read in the text, such as Tuilako (p.11) for Tuilakhu, Walkhu (p.71) for Bahalukha and Chalkhu (p.41) for Chalakhu.

Notwithstanding, the book gives us the idea of the distinct and important religious pictures of the ancient city, Lalitpur, where Buddhism has been predominating since the beginning of the medieval period. The book thus contains the information of the socio-religious activities of the town. It is useful for researchers, students and those who are interested in Nepalese culture.

– Dilli Raj Sharma

Notes to Contributors

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- Tiwari, Sudarshan Raj. 2001. *The Ancient Settlements of the Kathmandu Valley*. Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University.
- Maharjan, Pancha Narayan. 2000. "The Maoist Insurgency and Crisis of Governability in Nepal." In Dhruba Kumar (ed.), *Domestic Conflict and Crisis of Governability in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, pp. 163-196.
- Khatri, Sridhar K. 2001. "Teaching of International Relations in Nepal." *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, 28:2, pp 139-154.
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